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LONDON STREETS  
AND CATHOLIC MEMORIES

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# LONDON STREETS & CATHOLIC MEMORIES

By

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## INTRODUCTION

SEVERAL years ago a pleasant little book appeared under the title *A Gossiping Guide to Oxford*. Some such title might have fitted this book, except that it can hardly be called a guide to anything. But "gossiping" just describes it, especially as gossip is usually irresponsible and frequently inexact, even when not untrue. Its contents have appeared as a series of articles in the pages of *The Tablet*, and are here gathered together in one volume, rather because some readers asked for it, than because the writer thought his gossip worthy of permanent form. So the articles have been reprinted just as they appeared, save for the correction of a few blunders which the kindness of divers correspondents pointed out.

This little book, therefore, makes no claim to consideration. It is not original or critical or erudite or anything formidable like that. The writer has simply endeavoured to lead his readers down certain London streets, gossiping as he goes about old stories and long-distant happenings as

## INTRODUCTION

he found them recorded. He has not thought it necessary for such friendly chattering to verify and examine each statement with the care that a severe historical work would exact. These things are told of these streets. Many of them are certainly true; others perhaps—just gossip.

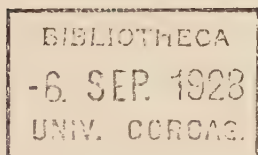
It will be noted that all the streets included are north of the Thames. The omission of the historic thoroughfares of Southwark, so rich in association with saints and martyrs, poets and pilgrims, is not due to any lack of appreciation. The writer has abstained from trespassing on that ground, first, because he has had no opportunity of becoming well acquainted with that part of London; and secondly because he is aware that one of his friends is specially fitted by his topographical knowledge and his literary skill to record for us the memories of Southwark and Bermondsey and other ancient places; therefore he accordingly lives in hope that some day the Rev. John Rory Fletcher will undertake to do so.

The writer desires to express his thanks to the Editor of *The Tablet* for permitting the republication of these articles, and to those whose generous appreciation has encouraged him to

## INTRODUCTION

respond thus to their demand that this should be brought about.

And he does hope that readers will open these pages in no critical or severe temper of mind, but in what Benedick calls "a gossip-like humour."





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# LONDON STREETS AND CATHOLIC MEMORIES

## I—CHANCERY LANE

IT is difficult to make a meditation in Chancery Lane—because of the traffic—but to make a meditation *on* Chancery Lane sets us in the footsteps of Saints and Martyrs, in a way somewhat surprising to those who only think of it as a narrow thoroughfare pronouncedly legal in character. If we begin from the Holborn end and make our way down the whole length of the Lane to Fleet Street we shall come in touch with many centuries. To begin with, we meet at the outset the gracious figure of St Hugh of Lincoln, who spent his last days on earth and died at the house of the Bishops of Lincoln, which stood at the corner of Chancery Lane and Holborn on the City side. Father Thurston, S.J., has described for us the ancient house with its chapel, gardens and orchard beyond, all originally the property of the Knights Templars before they migrated to the Temple. In his pages we read how the dying Saint lay there through the autumn of the

year 1200, spending the fevered hours in prayer from St Matthew's Day in September, when he received the last sacraments, till November 17—now his own festival—when he died saying the *Nunc dimittis* as he lay on a cross of blessed ashes spread upon the ground.

Leaving the site of St Hugh's house on our left, and beginning our journey down the Lane, we almost immediately pass on our right the original home of the Dominicans, for the Friars Preachers settled here before they acquired, in 1276, their riverside house which gave rise to the name Blackfriars still in everyday use. If the Angelic Doctor, St Thomas Aquinas, ever visited London, as I have heard he may well have done, it would be in this part of Chancery Lane that he would have stayed with his brethren, saying his Mass in their chapel there. In those days the Lane was still a country road with fields and gardens on either side, and often, as we shall see, in a deplorably muddy condition. For though it was then known as New Street, there was nothing in the nature of a paved way. A little farther on, and still on the right, we come to Lincoln's Inn, where stood the town house of the Bishops of Chichester, a fact still surviving in the name of a little alley called Chichester Rents. Ralph

## CHANCERY LANE

Neville, Bishop of Chichester from 1224 to 1244, owned the estate here, and as he was Chancellor of England the lane wherein his residence stood came to be called Chancellor's Lane instead of New Street. After Bishop Neville died here, he was succeeded by St Richard, the friend of St Edmund of Canterbury, who used this house as his London dwelling during the eight years of his episcopate. With St Hugh of Lincoln on its left and St Richard of Chichester on its right as we walk southwards, the Lane supplies us with two good points for our meditation. After St Richard's death, the next Bishop, John of Clymping, stopped up the lane "*levando ibidem duas stapulas cum una barra.*" Complaint later was made of these "two staples with one barre cross the said lane, whereby men with carts and other carriages could not pass." The Bishop's reply was that John Breton, Custos of London, set up the said staples and bar "for that the said lane was so dirty that no man could pass," and he granted "that what was annoyance should be taken away." And the Sheriff removed the offending bar.

When you reach the brick Gatehouse of Lincoln's Inn you have what is now the oldest thing in Chancery Lane, for it was built in 1518, a year

or two after Blessed Thomas More, a bencher of Lincoln's Inn, had read his second course of lectures there. In succeeding years the Martyr, whose steps so often traversed the Lane, must frequently have passed beneath this arch. Incidentally it is said that Ben Jonson, the poet and dramatist, who became a Catholic but did not persevere in the faith, in his early life worked as a bricklayer on this arch or some of the later buildings near it, "when having a trowel in one hand he had a book in his pocket." Before leaving Lincoln's Inn Gateway and the memory of Blessed Thomas More we may recall that in our own days another great Catholic judge, Lord Russell of Killowen, the first Catholic to be Lord Chief Justice of England since the Reformation, was also a student and bencher of this Inn.

Passing on our way, when we come to the handsome Record Office on the left, we are at the site of the old Rolls Chapel, demolished a few years ago to make room for the new buildings. It was a medieval foundation established by King Henry III in 1233 as a home for converted Jews. As this *Domus Conversorum* ceased to fulfil its original purpose after the expulsion of the Jews from England in 1290, the house and chapel were

annexed to the office of the Master of the Rolls. In later days the chapel was filled with monuments of post-Reformation date, and its associations were chiefly with great Anglican divines such as Burnet, Atterbury and Butler. As I remember the chapel over thirty years ago, there was nothing to suggest that for three hundred years the Mass had been offered within its ancient walls, so complete was the alteration of the interior. Yet it had been the official chapel of many great prelates who had held the office of Master of the Rolls, such as Archbishop Warham, Cardinal Bainbridge and Bishop Tunstall.

Other Catholic associations the Lane has, though they cannot be precisely located. It was in Chancery Lane that Blessed Thomas Sherwood was arrested in 1577 to be committed to prison "for hearing of a Mass," and subsequently to pass to "the dungeon amongst the rats" in the Tower of London, where he was thrice racked before his martyrdom at Tyburn. Even in the Tower this martyr could jest. When his keeper told him he was to be racked a second time, he said: "I am very little and you are very tall; you may hide me in your great hose and so they shall not find me."

In Elizabeth's reign George Gilbert and other

courageous young Catholics who banded themselves together for the assistance of priests set up their headquarters in Chancery Lane, with a sublime audacity taking lodgings in the house of the Queen's Chief Pursuivant himself. There, we read, they "for diverse years had access of priests unto them and sundry Masses daily said in their house, until the Jesuits came in, when times grew to be much more exasperated."

Somewhere near was the house of Arden Waferer, first cousin to the martyred Edward Arden. He was a barrister of the Inner Temple who was disbarred for his faith in 1570, and more than once his home in Chancery Lane was searched for Catholic books. He was a relative of Francis Waferer, a priest who died in Newgate under sentence of death.

Another place of resort for hunted priests about the year 1582 was "at the chamber of a Lancashire youth called Norryce," who, we learn, frequently changed his lodging, doubtless the better to continue his good work. Names of other residents are recorded in Lists of Recusants and the report of spies—names which mean little to us now except that they stand for those who were loyal to the faith of St Hugh and

## CHANCERY LANE

St Richard and Blessed Thomas in the days of trial.

Holborn and Fleet Street are both rich in Catholic memories. Chancery Lane, which connects them, though a by-way and no chief thoroughfare, seems, on consideration, a link worthy of both.

## II—CHEAPSIDE

TO have been the birthplace of two great Saints and national heroes is the chief glory of Cheapside, though its memories are many and splendid. To-day it is as drab and undistinguished as any other London street, but it remains memorable in our eyes for the fact that there, close to the Church of St Mary-le-Bow, whence pealed Bow Bells, St Thomas of Canterbury was born and Blessed Thomas More first saw the light.

The modern pilgrim seeking the spots hallowed in this way must turn his steps to the northern side of the street, where, between Ironmonger Lane and Old Jewry, he will find the Hall and Chapel of the Mercers' Company—the first on the roll of the Twelve Great Companies of London. The Mercers' Chapel stands on the site of the hospital of St Thomas of Acon, which hospital was bought by the Mercers on the dissolution of the religious houses.

It was the Saint's own sister, Agnes, the wife of Thomas Fitztheobald, "Baron of Heili in Tipperary," who, according to Stow, gave to the

master and brethren of the hospital "the lands with the appurtenances that sometime were Gilbert Becket's, father to the said Thomas, in the which he was born, there to make a church."

According to a medieval tradition St Thomas was baptized in the neighbouring church of St Mary Colechurch, which was destroyed during the Great Fire of London and never rebuilt. It was situated on the south end of Old Jewry, where Frederick's Place now runs. In the days of Elizabeth there was a record in the church that Henry IV had granted a licence for the foundation of a brotherhood of St Katherine therein "because Thomas Becket and St Edmond the Archbishop were baptized there." It is quite certain that St Edmund was baptized at Abingdon, and not in the City of London; but the tradition that St Mary Colechurch was the baptismal church of St Thomas is most probable. At any rate, we are certain that this spot of London was where "the blissful martyr" grew to boyhood, and where he had his home.

When we try to trace the birthplace of Blessed Thomas More we are not able to fix the exact spot, but if the pilgrim takes the third turning westward from Ironmonger Lane he will find himself in Milk Street. There during the Wars

of the Roses lived Sir John More, afterwards Judge of King's Bench, and there, on February 7, 1478, "between the second and third hours of the morning," Thomas More was born. Here, too, he spent his boyhood, going daily to school in Threadneedle Street.

The Cheapside that St Thomas of Canterbury knew in his boyhood was a great open space—the market place of London—with stalls and booths, which in later times were replaced by more permanent structures, and finally by houses, till the time arrived when Cheapside had become what it was when Blessed Thomas More ran about it as a lad. Then it was one of the stateliest of London streets, full of the goldsmiths' glittering shops, with houses four and five storeys high, built of brick and timber richly carved. Opposite Wood Street was a beautiful front of houses called Goldsmith's Row, which in 1491, when Thomas was thirteen years old, was built by Sheriff Thomas Wood and "garnished with the likeness of woodmen." The same Sheriff was a great benefactor to the Church of St Peter-in-Cheap, which stood at the corner of Wood Street, where the famous tree still flourishes. This church also perished in the Fire, never to be rebuilt.

Opposite it, in the middle of the street, stood

Cheapside Cross, with its tiers on tiers of statues brave in ornamental gilding, so honoured in Catholic times, so ill-treated by the Reformers, and finally demolished by the Puritans. Stow, in a little passage full of tender regret, records the defacement in 1581 of the representation of the Resurrection and the images of Our Lady and St Edward the Confessor. "The image of the Blessed Virgin was at that time robbed of her Son, and her arms broken by which she stayed him on her knees; her whole body also was haled with ropes and left likely to fall." A few months later in the same year Blessed Edmund Campion and his companions, being brought prisoners to London, where martyrdom awaited them, were led past the disfigured cross on their way to the Tower of London, when Edmund, bound on horseback, "made a low reverence to the cross which still remained on the top, and crossed himself as well as he could with his tied hands on the breast." The mob laughed and hissed at his act of devotion, but the memory of it remains dear. Sixty years later John Evelyn sadly wrote in his diary: "May 2, 1643.—I went to London, where I saw the furious and zealous people demolish that stately cross in Cheapside."

Should the pilgrim wish to come into actual

touch with Norman London he can do so for a few minutes by going to Wren's church of St Mary-le-Bow, where at stated times he may, on payment of a small fee, be admitted to the crypt, which is the only part left of the ancient church destroyed in the fire. It was in the days of William the Conqueror that a church of Our Lady was built in this spot on stone arches. It was first called New Marie Church, to distinguish it from the mother church of St Mary Aldermary—the oldest of all Our Lady's London churches. Then, from the arches on which it was reared, it came to be known as St Mary de Arcubus, and hence St Mary-le-Bow. In the same way Stratford-at-Bow took the latter part of its name from the arched bridge built by Queen Matilda over the Lea there. From the fact that its sittings took place in this church, the Supreme Court of Appeal for the Province of Canterbury came to be known as the "Court of Arches." The Archbishop's Court was held here because it was one of the thirteen churches which, though situate in the diocese of London, were under the "peculiar" jurisdiction of Canterbury. Until the Reformation, appeal lay from this Court to the Pope; since that time it is to the King in Chancery.

The old church of St Mary-le-Bow had many

vicissitudes. Almost as soon as it was built the roof was blown off in a tempest. A century later the steeple was seized by a seditious tailor called William Fitzosbert, who fortified and provisioned it for a siege, and who was finally dislodged by the drastic method of setting fire to it. In 1271 the steeple itself crashed in Cheapside, killing many people who were in the street at the time. When it was rebuilt it contained five "lanthorns," in which lights were burned at night to serve as a guide to travellers approaching the city.

Most firmly fixed in the popular memory of all the traditions of Bow Church is that of Bow Bells. To be a real "Cockney" it is essential to be born within sound of their ringing. In the Middle Ages they pealed each evening as a signal for the cessation of work. An old City rhyme recalls the indignation of the apprentices when the sexton was late in the discharge of this duty:—

Clerk of the Bow Bell, with the yellow locks,  
For thy late ringing thy head shall have knocks.

To which the clerk replied:—

Children of Cheap, hold you all still,  
For you shall have the Bow Bell rung at your will.

In Stow's young days these apprentice boys of Cheapside wore a distinctive dress, consisting of

white broadcloth breeches and stockings, with a blue cloak in summer and a blue gown in winter, but in his old age he lamented that this ancient custom was no longer observed. "Now they dress as they please, and, except that they carry the club and break each other's pates withal, they are no longer like the old 'prentice."

One tragedy which happened in Cheapside in the ages of faith was of an unexampled character. This was the murder of the Bishop of Exeter, Walter de Stapledon, by the hands of a mob in 1326. He had been Professor of Canon Law at Oxford, and was chaplain to Pope Clement V. He was afterwards Treasurer to Edward II, and in this capacity incurred the hatred of the London populace. He was beheaded "at the Standard in Chepe."

Before leaving Cheapside we may recall one other Catholic memory of much later date—the more so as it has been generally overlooked by writers on the London missions of to-day. This was the existence in Bow Lane of a small Catholic chapel dedicated to St Thomas (apparently the Apostle), which was opened there in 1809, and which was the predecessor of the present German Church in Whitechapel. It continued open for just fifty years, and was frequently served by German

## CHEAPSIDE

or Polish priests. In 1859 the German Church was removed to Friar Street, near St Paul's, where it remained till the mission in Union Street was opened.

Catholic memories in Cheapside appear to come to an end with the closing of the Bow Lane chapel. There is one more memory, not of our own, but one of which some Catholics may care to be reminded. It is that of Herrick, who wrote:—

. . . the golden Cheapside, where the earth  
Of Julian Herrick gave to me my birth.

### III—WOOD STREET, CHEAPSIDE

**I**N the previous paper on Cheapside, some passing mention was made of Wood Street. But this narrow thoroughfare has so many associations of its own, especially in connection with some of the English Martyrs, that it is worth a little pilgrimage on its own account.

The origin of the name has been much disputed. It has been thought that as some of the streets leading into Cheapside have names indicating the particular market held there, such as Bread Street, Milk Street, Friday Street (which was the salt-fish market), so this street may have been the wood market. Stow suggests that it was so called, either because all the houses therein were built of wood, or that it was named after Thomas Wood, Sheriff of London, who dwelt there in the fifteenth century and was a great benefactor of the church of St Peter, at the corner where the street enters Cheapside. Whatever the history of the name, the thoroughfare itself has very ancient associations, for its history leads us back to Offa, the Saxon king, who made himself master of the greater part of the country before

his death in 796. He had a great devotion to St Alban the Martyr, as testified by his foundation of the great abbey at St Albans; and here in Wood Street still survives, at least in name, another trace of that devotion. For Offa's London dwelling was situate here in Wood Street at the corner of what is now Gresham Street, but once was Lad or Ladle Lane. And at this same corner is Wren's church of St Alban, Wood Street, which replaced, after the Fire, the medieval church which was the successor of Offa's own chapel. Thus the dedication is a link with a long-vanished past. In 793, three years before his death, Offa granted this church of St Alban in the City of London to St Alban's Abbey, which held it till the Norman Conquest. Soon after that event it was exchanged for another advowson held by the Abbots of Westminster, one of whom finally settled it as an endowment for St James's Hospital for Lepers in the parish of Westminster. This hospital Henry VIII dissolved and confiscated, with the ultimate result that the Leper Hospital developed into St James's Palace. That is an origin not often remembered.

Standing in front of the present church of St Alban, Wood Street, we may recall that the part

of Gresham Street which runs westward was anciently called Maiden Lane, from some statue of Our Lady which distinguished it in Catholic times. Thus we may begin this pilgrimage down Wood Street to Cheapside from a spot where the sacrifice of the Mass was offered for nearly eight hundred years before St Alban's Church was stripped of its altars, and all images of Our Lady disappeared.

Journeying down the street, the pilgrim passes on his right another of Wren's churches which also marks the site of an ancient Catholic parish church—that of St Michael, Wood Street. There was a strong devotion to the great Archangel in medieval London. There are still four parishes dedicated to him in the City—Bassishaw, Cornhill, Paternoster Royal and Wood Street. There were formerly three others—St Michael-le-Querne; St Michael, Crooked Lane; and St Michael, Poultry—making seven in all. This one is only remarkable for the curious story that it is the resting-place of the head of King James IV of Scotland, slain at the battle of Flodden Field. According to Stow, the king's body, wrapped in lead, was carried to the monastery of Sheen, where it remained till the dissolution of religious houses, when it was thrown into a lumber-room.

While there, some workmen separated the head from the body, "the form remaining, with the hair of the head and the beard red." In Elizabeth's time, one Launcelot Young, "master-glazier to Her Majesty," brought it home to his house in Wood Street as a curiosity, but in the end "caused the sexton of that church to bury it amongst other bones taken out of their charnel."

The rectory of this church, like that of St Alban, was originally in the gift of the Abbot of St Alban's, which suggests that this, too, was due in some way to the original grant of Offa. Some portions of the tower of the old Catholic church still remain in the present tower, as it was not entirely destroyed by the Fire, and Wren utilized what he found still standing.

Leaving St Michael's, we come on our left to the site of the prison called the Wood Street Counter, to distinguish it from another Counter in the Poultry. The actual site was opposite Goldsmith Street, where the houses on the east side recede a little. It is sacred ground to us for the sake of the martyrs and other staunch Catholics who suffered imprisonment—and worse—for the faith within the walls of this gaol. These Compters, or Counters, were originally debtors' prisons under the jurisdiction of the Lord Mayor,

the Sheriffs having the actual control. In the time of the martyrs it was a comparatively new prison, having been opened on St Michael's Day, 1555, to replace its predecessor in Bread Street.

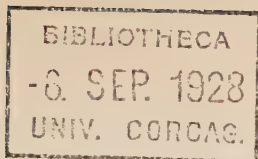
There were three divisions: the Knights' Ward, reserved for prisoners who could afford to pay for better accommodation; the Masters' side, which was somewhat cheaper; and "The Hole," in which those who could not pay at all were confined. The hall of the prison was provided with a touch of moral influence in a set of hangings depicting the story of the Prodigal Son. The immediate care of the prisoners was entrusted to a master keeper and two turnkeys, but the administration was in the hands of a "Secondary," assisted by five clerks. For the purpose of making arrests he had at his disposal eighteen serjeants at mace, who went in blue cloth gowns, each accompanied by his yeoman.

Into this gaol were brought many prisoners for religion, foremost among whom stands out Blessed Alexander Briant, who entered its doors on the day of his capture, April 28, 1581. He was only twenty-seven years of age, and was of such striking beauty that when he was at the University he was known as "the handsome boy of Oxford." Oxford, and all it could offer him, he left for the

sake of conscience to enter the College at Douay. He had been a priest for just two years when he was arrested. As it was known that he was intimate with Father Persons, for whom the Government was eagerly searching, it was decided to extract information from him as to the whereabouts of his friend. He was placed in solitary confinement here in Wood Street and entirely deprived of food and drink for two days and two nights. When almost starving he obtained "a pennyworth of hard cheese and a little broken bread with a pint of strong beer, which brought him into such an extreme thirst that he essayed to catch with his hat the drops of rain from the house eaves, but could not reach them." It is Cardinal Allen himself who gives us this account. After six days of ill-treatment Alexander Briant left Wood Street for the Tower of London, where he was to suffer the rack and the hideous torture of "pricking" before he went to the final victory at Tyburn with Edmund Campion and Ralph Sherwin.

Many other well-known priests followed him to Wood Street Counter, including at least one other martyr—Ven. Robert Dibdale, who spent some portion of his captivity here in 1586. He was a priest from the West Country who had been ordained two years earlier, and who during his

brief priestly career had taken a leading part in the strange exorcisms at Denham, near Uxbridge, and the house of Lord Vaux at Hackney. Two of his fellow-captives at Wood Street deserve some mention. They were two boys of nineteen—Roger Lyne, the youthful husband of Ven. Ann Lyne, who after his death was herself to suffer martyrdom; and William Heigham, her brother. Both had been taken at the house of Mr. and Mrs. Lyne in Bishopsgate Street Without while hearing the Mass of Ven. William Thomson in January, 1586. For this offence the priest was executed at Tyburn on April 18 following. Before dying he promised Ann Lyne that if he came to martyrdom he would pray that she, too, might win the martyr's crown. Fifteen years later the prayer was heard, and she died at Tyburn for harbouring priests. "I wish with all my soul," she cried on the scaffold, "that where I have entertained one I could have entertained a thousand." One likes to think of this heroic woman making her way down Wood Street to visit her boy husband and her brother in their chains. If she went by Cheapside she would pass at the corner the desecrated little church dedicated to St Peter, for whose prerogative they suffered.



#### IV—CORNHILL

**I**F the ancient legend attaching to St Peter's, Cornhill, has any foundation of truth, then that church marks the site of the first Cathedral of London. There is in the vestry an ancient tablet, which in Elizabeth's time was in the church, that sets out the story in considerable detail. Stow, who mentions it, without attaching much importance to it, does not quote it. But the text is of interest. It runs:—"Bee it knowne to all men that the yeare of our Lord God 179 Lucius, the first Christian king of this land, then called Britaine, founded the first church in London, that is to say, the Church of St Peter upon Cornehill. And hee founded there an Archbishop's See, and made the church the metropolitaine and chief church of this kingdome; and so indured the space of 400 yeares unto the coming of St Austin, the Apostle of England, the which was sent into this land by St Gregorie, the Doctor of the Church, in the time of King Ethelbert. And then was the Archbishop's See and Pall removed from the foresaid Church of St Peter upon Cornehill unto Dorobernia, that

now is called Canterburie, and there it remaineth to this day. And Millet, a monke [St Mellitus], which came into this land with St Austin, hee was made the first bishop of London, and his See was made in Paul's Church. And this Lucius, king, was the first founder of St Peter's Church upon Cornehill. And hee reigned in this land after Brute 1245 yeares. And in the yeare of our Lord God 124 Lucius was crowned king, and the yeares of his reigne were 77 yeares. And hee was buried after some chronicles at London, and after some chronicles hee was buried at Glocester, where the Order of St Francis standeth now."

Stow adds further details from a medieval chronicler, Joceline of Furness, to the effect that the first Archbishop of London was Thuan, who built the church by the aid of Ciran, chief butler to King Lucius, and that Eluanus the second Archbishop built a library there and converted many Druids.

Though sober history knows nothing of these personages, and chronology does not admit the dates, yet who shall say for certain that there is no foundation of fact underlying the story so precisely elaborated? There is some kernel of reality at the heart of the most visionary folk-lore. Certainly there was a Bishop in Roman London of

the fourth century, and with equal certainty we deduce the existence of some cathedral where he offered the divine mysteries. St Peter's Church stands close by the "Carfax" of the Roman city. The dedication could not be more Roman. And these antecedent probabilities receive some confirmation from the fact that in medieval times the parishioners of St Peter's took precedence immediately after the Cathedral clergy from St Paul's Cathedral and before all the other City parishes. This, coupled with the parochial claims as recorded on the tablet, at least establishes the certainty that the tradition, whatever its actual worth, was accepted in Catholic times as well established. Surely it still deserves remembrance.

This parish was one of the four mentioned in a statute of Henry VI, as maintaining grammar-schools. The other three were All-Hallows, Thames Street; St Andrew's, Holborn; and St Thomas Acon. It also possessed a good library, which was dispersed at the Reformation. This was lodged in a stone building repaired by the executors of Alderman Sir John Crosby, and adorned with his arms. Stow informs us that "this library hath been of late time, to wit, within these fifty years, well furnished of books;

John Leland viewed and commended them; but now these books be gone and the place is occupied by a schoolmaster and his usher over a number of scholars."

Close to St Peter's stands the church of St Michael, Cornhill, with its splendid tower. The history of this parish goes back to Norman times, if not earlier. One "Alnoth the priest" gave it to the Abbey of Evesham, and in 1133 the Abbot granted it, apparently on lease, to "Sperling the priest" on condition that he and his successors when visiting London as peers of Parliament should be supplied with "lodging, salt, water, and fire." Early in the sixteenth century, St Michael's, Cornhill, was conveyed by the Abbot and Convent of Evesham to the Drapers' Company.

It was natural that the Drapers' Company should acquire the rectory of St Michael's, for in the later Middle Ages Cornhill was their great trading centre, and they also occupied most of Birchin Lane. Here they continued till after the days of Elizabeth. Middleton, writing in 1604, speaks of "passing through Birchin Lane amidst a camp-royal of hose and doublets." The part of Cornhill which ran westwards from Birchin Lane was occupied by dealers in old

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apparel and second-hand household stuff. They were known as Fripperers, and occasionally dealt in stolen property as readers of Lydgate will remember.

Then into Corn-Hyl anon I yode,  
Where was mutch stolen gere amonge.  
I saw where honge myne owne hoode  
That I had lost amonge the thronge.  
To by my own hood I thought it wrong.  
I knew it well as I did my crede,  
But for lack of money I could not spede.

Running from Cornhill to Lombard Street is the lane with the distinctly papistical name of Pope's Head Alley, which derives its name from the Pope's Head Tavern, an inn which was already in existence under that sign in the Catholic days of King Edward IV. In his reign this house was the scene of a wager between an Alicant goldsmith and an English brother of the craft. The Spaniard maintained that Englishmen were not "so cunning in workmanship of goldsmithry as Alicant strangers," and undertook to prove his assertion by his own superior work, in which endeavour he failed. The tavern's Popish sign managed to survive the Reformation and was still in existence in the latter part of the eighteenth century.

After the Reformation there are no Catholic associations of any special interest in Cornhill, though martyrs and others must frequently have traversed its cobble-stones. When the Protestant Bishop of London made his Privy Council return of Recusants in 1577, he only reported one Catholic, Barnard Lambe, as resident in the parish of St Peter, Cornhill, and he is described as "a banquerupte and of no valewe."

Seven years later, in August, 1584, there was a search for Catholics in Cornhill, when Mr. Deputy Banks discovered in the house of Thomas Forman, upholsterer, "himself, wife, and two men and two women servants, and four young children." He also found in the house of Thomas Fox, "himself and wife, a boy and woman servant, and three children who are, we think, but little to be suspected." These poor forgotten folk, of whom no memory survives but this brief dry record, may seem hardly worth mention, but as it was their loyalty to the ancient faith that brought on them the terrors, and perhaps the damage and ruin of a search, we may at least give them a sympathetic thought in passing.

Before leaving Cornhill, we may recall that among other good Catholic folk buried in the churchyard of St Michael's were Ralph Fabian,

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the chronicler, who was also Sheriff of London in 1493, and also the parents and grandparents of the later chronicler, John Stow himself, who says that they were laid "in the little green churchyard of the Parish Church of St Michael in Cornhill between the Cross and the Church wall, nigh the wall as may be."

## V—FLEET STREET

THE Catholic who would “take a walk down Fleet Street” will find much to recall besides the memory of Dr. Samuel Johnson or the great Victorian journalists as he paces down “the Street of Adventure.”

Though within sight of St Paul’s, all this neighbourhood once was St Peter’s land, for it formed part of the munificent grant made by King Edgar to the monks of Westminster whom his friend St Dunstan had brought there from Glastonbury. That is the reason why St Dunstan had his western church in Fleet Street, balancing St Dunstan’s-in-the-East.

This street is one of the great historic highways of London, for though in the Middle Ages the Thames was the chief means of communication between London and Westminster, he who would ride or walk from one to the other must needs pass out of Ludgate, where the City itself ended within the circuit of its walls, into this “Liberty of the City,” which extended so far as Temple Bar, which flung across the roadway the barrier marking the end of the “liberty.”

If we begin from the site of Temple Bar, now marked by a heraldic beast on a stone pedestal, we have on our right the Temple, so rich in Catholic memories that it calls for a notice to itself; but as we pass Inner Temple Lane we may think of the lawyer-martyr, Ven. Richard Langhorne, who had his chambers there, wherein he once received a visit from Dr. Titus Oates—as was subsequently narrated at his trial—which occasion helped him much to his crown and palm.

On the left of the street stands St Dunstan's church, rebuilt in 1831, but approximately marking the site of the medieval Catholic church, which, however, lay somewhat to the south of the present building, jutting out into Fleet Street and narrowing the thoroughfare. Here were buried two of the "Eleven Bishops" who died as confessors of the faith under Elizabeth—Dr. Ralph Baines, Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, and Dr. Owen Oglethorpe, Bishop of Carlisle. The former was a great Greek and Hebrew scholar, who was chosen as one of the eight defenders of Catholic doctrine at the Westminster Conference. After being deprived of his bishopric he was confined to the palace of the Bishop of London till he died of the stone and was buried here on November 24, 1559. The Bishop of Carlisle is remembered as

the prelate who consented to crown Queen Elizabeth, but who refused to omit, at her bidding, the elevation in the Mass celebrated in her presence. His body was laid to rest here six weeks after the burial of Bishop Baines. The old church, in which these bishops and confessors were buried, originally belonged to the monks of Westminster, which accounts for the dedication to St Dunstan, as we have seen. In 1237 Abbot Richard de Barling gave the rectory to King Henry III, that the revenues might endow the refuge for converted Jews which had recently been established in Chancery Lane, close at hand.

A little beyond St Dunstan's is Fetter Lane, which has nothing to do with fetters, but gets its name from the "fewters" or idle people who, as Stow says, used to lie there "as in a way leading to gardens." But in his time, he adds, it was "of latter years on both sides built through with many fair houses." The Fleet Street end of Fetter Lane was long used as a place of public execution, and is one of our sacred spots. For here took place the martyrdom of Ven. Christopher Bayles, a Durham priest, ordained at Reims in 1588 and captured soon after his arrival. In Bridewell he had been hideously ill-treated and tortured by Topcliffe, being once suspended by

his hands for twenty-four hours. On March 4, 1590, he was drawn to this place to be hanged and quartered. In the following year two more martyrdoms took place in Fleet Street, most probably upon this same spot. Ven. Montford Scot and Ven. George Beesley were led out together to die for their priesthood. The former was a priest noted for his mortified life, his diet on ordinary days being but bread and water, "and he would take but little more on Sundays and holidays." It was his custom to spend whole days and nights in prayer. When he was stripped at his execution one of the spectators cried out: "I should be glad to see any one of our ministers with their knees as much hardened by constant prayer as we see this man's knees are." His companion, George Beesley, who was young, had been so cruelly tortured that his friends could scarcely believe that this living skeleton of a man was the strong and robust young priest they had known. A bystander who cried out, "Is this the treason? I came to see traitors and have seen saints," was immediately arrested and cast into prison for his audacity.

Behind the south side of the street, opposite to the scene of these martyrdoms, lies Whitefriars, which in the time of the later martyrs was rapidly

becoming "Alsatia"—a sanctuary for fraudulent debtors, gamblers, and men outside the pale of the law. But in Catholic days it had been a sanctuary of quite a different kind. For this was the home of the London Carmelites, a house said to have been founded by St Simon Stock himself on land given for the purpose by King Edward I. It lay open to Fleet Street, separated only by an open space planted with shrubs and trees, as you may see in Anthony van Wyngaerde's plan of 1543. Its church, built for the friars by one of the Earls of Devon, had been finished by Bishop Mascall of Hereford, who added choir, sanctuary and steeple. All has vanished, and now is represented only by a name—the now familiar name of Carmelite Street.

As we travel eastwards along the north side of the street, we pass Red Lion Court, the scene of the murder of a Jesuit, Father Anthony Carroll, who was here knocked down and robbed on the evening of September 5, 1794, receiving such injuries that he died in St Bartholomew's Hospital next morning.

Farther along, Peterborough Court marks the site of the town-house of the Abbots, and afterwards the Bishops, of Peterborough. At one time it was occupied by another of the "Eleven

Bishops"—Dr. David Poole. A more famous episcopal dwelling stood on the ground now occupied by Salisbury Square, on the south side of Fleet Street. This was the "Inn" or London lodging of the Bishops of Salisbury, and was alienated by John Jewel, the first Anglican holder of that title. In all probability Cardinal Campeggio stayed here during the divorce proceedings of Henry VIII. The old house was destroyed in the Great Fire and never rebuilt. Among other Catholic residents of Salisbury Square was John Dryden.

Opposite the end of Shoe Lane stood Fleet Conduit and Standard. This conduit brought "sweet water from Tyborn," and was made by a legacy from William Eastfield, a mercer, in 1438. In the reign of Edward IV an enterprising wax chandler in Fleet Street tapped this conduit "and so conveyed the water into his selar," for which offence he was condemned to ride through the city "with a conduit upon his head," by which device the punishment fitted the crime.

Close to this standard took place the martyrdom of Ven. Edward Jones, a priest noted for his zealous preaching, who suffered here on May 6, 1590. On the gallows was written: "For treason and favouring of foreign invasion." The martyr

protested against this, and while he was speaking he was thrown from the ladder and the butchery began. Another priest, Ven. Anthony Middleton, was compelled to stand on the scaffold so close to the martyr that he was sprinkled with his blood. He then was carried away to Clerkenwell, where he, too, was martyred. The reason why this execution took place here rather than at the usual spot at the end of Fetter Lane, was that the martyr had been captured in one of the houses opposite the standard. Many Catholics lived in this street during the penal days, several priests dwelt in hiding there, and it seems to have been a favourite quarter for Catholic physicians and apothecaries.

St Bride's church, which boasts the tallest steeple in London, was the only City church dedicated to St Bridget, and its history is very obscure. Stow says of it that it was "of old time a small thing," but about 1480 the Warden of the Fleet, William Viner, added a large nave and aisles, "all which he caused to be wrought about in the stone, in the figure of a vine with grapes and leaves." In this old church, burned down in the Great Fire, was buried, in 1534, the famous Catholic printer, Wynkyn de Worde, who founded an annual Mass "to be said for his soul on the day

of his death for ever." For the last thirty-five years of his life he had been a parishioner living "at the sign of the Golden Sun in the parish of St Bride, in the Flete-strete, London." The present vicarage occupies the site of the old prison of Bridewell, wherein so many of our martyrs were tortured by Topcliffe in ways too diabolically cruel to be attempted by him in the Tower of London even in those days.

As we draw near to Ludgate Circus it is difficult to reconstruct in our mind's eye this part of the City as it was in the time of Elizabeth, and as our martyrs knew it. But then, and for long years afterwards, the Fleet River rolled down to the Thames where the Circus now lies, and great barges went up as far as Holborn. The Fleet was spanned here by a bridge leading to Ludgate. It was a narrow bridge of stone decorated with "wells embraced by angels" in honour of the builder, John Wels, who was mayor in 1431, when it was erected. Close by the bridge one of our martyrs, Ven. Polydore Plasden, was born, his father being a horner, or worker in horn, who dwelt there.

Such are some of the early Catholic memories of the "Street of Adventure." When people ceased to live in Fleet Street, and it became

purely commercial, the stream of these memories dwindled away. But some day someone will write of new memories clustering round the names of the Catholic journalists of yesterday and to-day and the effective aid they have rendered, and still render, to the cause of the ancient faith in which the Carmelites of Whitefriars lived and the Fleet Street martyrs died.

## VI—CANNON STREET

**T**HIS street, like its own name, has been altered and changed almost beyond knowledge. It has been widened on the south side and lengthened in the direction of St Paul's, so that now it is nearly double its original extent. Yet, if we follow its north side from Walbrook down to where the modern King William Street cuts across it, we can trace the actual course of the thoroughfare, which first was known as Candlewick Street.

From Candlewick Street it came to be called Canwick Street, as it is labelled in the early Elizabethan plan of London by Ralph Agas. A century later Pepys knew it as Canning Street, and in the Plan of London after the Fire, engraved by Wenceslaus Hollar in 1667, it is already marked as "Canon Street."

The name "Candlewick," or its variation "Candlewright," suggests that it was originally the part of the town where the wax and tallow candles were made. But John Lydgate, the monk of Bury, connects it in his day, when

## LONDON STREETS AND CATHOLIC MEMORIES

Henry V was king, with drapers and purveyors of food:—

Then forth I went by London Stone,  
Throughout all the Canwick Street,  
Drapers much cloth me offered anon,  
Then comes me one cried, " Hot sheep's feet !"  
One cried " Mackerel !" " Rushes green !" another  
gan greet.  
One bade me buy a hood to cover my head;  
But for want of money I might not be sped.

But, however Cannon Street has changed in other respects, that same London Stone which Lydgate saw as he passed that way five hundred years ago may still be seen there by our own eyes to-day. What remains of it is encased in a species of reliquary of stone and iron built into the end wall of St Swithin's Church. If it is not the oldest thing in London, as it well may be, it is older than any Christian thing there. As you look at it you are in touch with Roman London, medieval London, post-Reformation London—the London of the Cæsars and the London of to-day. For London Stone, though it fell on evil days before it was rescued and made safe, has always been a notable object. Originally it would seem to have been some sort of obelisk, of which but the stump survives—a stump it was even in the Middle Ages. But when it was

moved in 1742 from its original place on the south side of the street it was found to rest on masonry so massive as to warrant the conjecture that it was originally of considerable size to necessitate such a foundation. On this hypothesis some have guessed it to be the central *milliarium* of Roman London from which the Roman roads in Britain radiated. But its site, apart from other considerations, is against this theory. Stow describes it as being "fixed in the ground very deep, fastened with bars of iron, and otherwise so strongly set that if carts do run against it through negligence the wheels be broken, and the stone itself unshaken." He claims to have seen a gospel-book given by King Athelstan to Christchurch, Canterbury, in which was copied a grant of land therein described as "near to London Stone." So it had its name, and its fame as a landmark, in dim Saxon times. And it was already there when the Saxons first came to London, and when their first Christian bishop set up his altar on the hill whereon St Paul's now stands. In the time of King Stephen a very great fire broke out which consumed all the City eastward as far as Aldgate, and we learn that the conflagration began in a house near to London Stone. One of the great civic worthies of the Plantagenet

days, FitzAylwin, sometimes described as the first Mayor of London, was commonly called "Henry FitzAylwin of London Stone," as he lived in "a very fair house" on the north side of St Swithin's Church just opposite. Shakespeare describes Jack Cade as striking his staff on London Stone, and thereupon, "here sitting on London Stone," issuing his decrees as "lord of the city." It was also very commonly used as a spot appointed for the payment of debts. Past it went the citizens in their processions of Rogationtide and on other occasions; past it, in later days, went some of the martyrs on their journey to and from the Tower of London. When Blessed John Storey, the intrepid layman and lawyer, who was martyred in 1571, was being taken back to the Tower of London from Westminster Hall, where he had been condemned, he was pursued with insults, and we hear that when he came to London Stone one greeted him with doggerel which was remembered, repeated and recorded:—

Master doctor Story,  
 For you they are quite sorry,  
 The Court of Lovaine and Rome,  
 Your holy father the pope  
 Cannot save you from rope;  
 The hangman must have your gown.

## CANNON STREET

Apart from this incident Cannon Street does not figure much in the later records of Catholics. In the accounts of the Elizabethan persecution we read much more frequently of the "liberties" of the City than of the City itself. Catholics were numerous both in Holborn and in Fleet Street, but within the City walls they seem to have been fewer. In the Exchequer Roll for Recusants in 1592-3, which has been published by the Catholic Record Society, the number of recusants is strikingly small compared with the actual number of householders then in the City.

Thus the memories of Cannon Street chiefly centre round the names of the pre-Reformation churches in the neighbourhood. The churches themselves all perished in the Great Fire. But if you walk there you will find streets and lanes which recall them. In Cannon Street itself Wren's church of St Swithin, in the wall of which London Stone will be found, is on the site of the medieval church of Saxon origin which belonged to the Augustinian priory of Tortington in Sussex. The prior had his town house close by where Oxford Court now stands. In St Swithin's there were four chantries established for the celebration of Mass for the souls of the founders. Just before the old church was burned down

Dryden was married there to Lady Elizabeth Howard.

Somewhere in the area now covered by Cannon Street Railway Station stood the curiously named church, St Mary Bothaw, sometimes called "St Mary Boatehaw by the Erbor." It stood near the river and derived its name from a boatyard or "hawe" near Dowgate, where river craft could be built or repaired. After the fire it was not rebuilt, and the parish was amalgamated with that of St Swithin.

As you walk down Cannon Street towards London Bridge you will come to Laurence Pountney Lane, and will find there a churchyard, adjacent to which stood the church called St Laurence Poultney, where the Flemish weavers used to meet in Catholic days. It received its name Poultney, now corrupted into Pountney, from a great benefactor of the church, Sir John Poultney, who, in the reign of Edward III, erected it into a collegiate church for a warden and seven chaplains, who were to perform divine service there. It is referred to as "The College of Jesus and Corpus Christi," and was attached to Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. It was one of the foundations suppressed by the reformers. The manor once belonged to Edmund de la Pole,

Duke of Suffolk, first cousin of Blessed Margaret Pole, and on his attainder in 1513 was granted by Henry VIII to his brother-in-law, Charles Brandon, created Duke of Suffolk. Close by you will find two small thoroughfares which recall this connection: Suffolk Lane, which is obvious, and the "Duke's foot-lane," which has long since degenerated into Duckfoot Lane.

The next turning to Laurence Pountney Lane is called Martin's Lane, in which formerly stood the small church of St Martin's Orgars, named after a twelfth-century deacon called Orgar. St Martin was a well-beloved saint in London, for he had no fewer than five churches dedicated to him—Ludgate, Orgars, Pomary, Vintry and Outwich.

In Martin's Lane, among other "fair and large houses for merchants," stood Beauchamp House, which was sometimes occupied by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Arundel, who had so troubled a pontificate, being a strenuous opponent of the Lollards in the time of Richard II. He it was who, being exiled and taking refuge with the Pope, was translated by Boniface IX from the English see of Canterbury to the Scottish see of St Andrew's, but who was subsequently reinstated in the English primacy and lived to crown King Henry IV.

In the next lane again—it seems as though in the ages of faith almost every street had its church—stood one of St Michael's seven London churches. This one, in St Michael's Lane—now vanished—was known as St Michael's, Crooked Lane. It was rebuilt by Wren after the Fire, but pulled down in 1831 to clear the approach to new London Bridge. Old St Michael's was the burying-place of the celebrated citizen and Lord Mayor, Sir William Walworth, who slew Wat Tyler in 1381, an action still remembered when his worthier deeds are all forgot. He founded here a "college" for a master and ten chaplains—another of those collegiate churches established in that age for God's glory. Sir William, who is described by the chronicler as "a man, wise, learned and of incomparable manhood," added to the existing church a new choir with side chapels, and in the chapel on the north side of his choir he was buried when he died in 1385. It was in his mayoralty that a new seal for the City of London was engraved, which showed Saints Peter and Paul with the City arms beneath them and two angels in tabernacles above "between whom, above the said images of Peter and Paul, shall be set the glorious Virgin."

This "glorious Virgin," so revered and honoured

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by the City fathers in those days, had one of her many London churches a little to the north of Cannon Street. This is St Mary Abchurch in Abchurch Lane. The name is a corruption of "Upchurch," denoting that it stood on rising ground. On the site of the medieval church Wren built the present quaint building, standing four-square in brick and Portland stone, to serve for the united parishes of St Mary and St Laurence Poultney. There is nothing in it of special interest to Catholics, though it has some beautiful wood carving by Grinling Gibbons. But the Catholic visitor cannot but feel that the "glorious Virgin" finds no place in this church which bears her name. Abchurch Yard marks the limit of the old churchyard in which so many Catholics were buried, each of whom might have made his own the old epitaph from St Michael's, Crooked Lane, for John Shrow, stockfishmonger, who died in 1487:—

Farewell, my friends, the tide abideth no man  
I am departed hence, and so shall ye;  
But in this passage the best song that I can  
Is *requiem aeternam* now Jesus grant it me.

## VII—NEWGATE

**N**EWGATE is in fact an extremely old gate, certainly as old as Norman days, probably even older. Its recorded history begins with the reign of King John, but earlier traditions have survived. Stow connects it with the rebuilding of St Paul's by Maurice, Bishop of London, after the old Saxon cathedral had been burnt down in the time of William the Conqueror. His account is that the building operations were so extensive that the common highway between Aldgate and Ludgate was blocked, so that the citizens had to go round by Paternoster Row and other narrow lanes. It was to relieve this early problem of congested traffic that a "new gate" was made in the City walls. But later authorities with fuller information have some reason to believe that there was a gate in the original Roman wall on this spot, to which Watling Street ran.

All City gates in early times were used as prisons, the massive towers and rooms over the gateway providing space for dungeons below and cells above in which prisoners could safely be kept.

In London from a very early date Ludgate was used for debtors and Newgate for law-breakers. Newgate, however, had pre-eminence in one respect. It seems always to have been the worst prison in London. Its historian, Major Griffiths, speaking of its state as recorded in the earliest extant accounts, says: "It was a dark pestiferous den, then and for centuries later perpetually ravaged by deadly diseases." In later days, throughout the period of persecution, it was the scene of terrible sufferings borne by our Catholic forefathers for the sake of the ancient faith. In no spirit of bitterness, brooding over their wrongs, do we recall these cruelties; but in loyalty to their memory and in admiration for their heroism we rightly keep alive the remembrance of their conflict. In the gate itself and the adjacent buildings added to it in process of time many martyrs and confessors suffered captivity, and many died there in chains, worn out by the darkness and foulness of the place. In the Sessions House adjoining, many of them were tried for their lives, and very many received sentence of death there. A bare list of martyrs imprisoned, tried, and sentenced to death on this spot would run to a lengthy column of names; and we can only select an incident here and there to illustrate the

tale of human suffering and endurance which this place has witnessed. In recalling this special aspect of Newgate we must never lose sight of the fact that it was the chief criminal gaol of London, through which passed an unending procession of vice, wickedness, innocence wrongly accused. Detestable as many of its inmates were, one cannot help some touch of human sympathy for that vast number of wretched beings who left the gate for the gallows at Tyburn or lingered out their lives within its foul precincts.

The gate and prison, as the martyrs and confessors knew them, were destroyed in the Great Fire of London, and no drawing or picture has survived to show what manner of buildings they were. But they dated from the age of Sir Richard Whittington, that great citizen whose fame is enshrined in folk-lore and pantomime. In his will he left moneys to be expended on rebuilding Newgate, which had fallen into a ruinous state. His executors carried out his wishes, and built the gate-prison which lasted till 1666. Other citizens left money for a water-supply, and one curious bequest is that of a breviary for the use of any cleric who might be imprisoned there.

At the very outbreak of the persecution under Henry VIII, Newgate was glorified by the martyr-

dom of nine of the Carthusian Fathers, beatified by Pope Leo XIII in 1886. The Prior and five of the community from the London Charterhouse suffered on the scaffold. Ten others were carried here to Newgate on May 29, 1537. They were never brought to trial; but, with hands bound behind them, they were chained to posts in a dungeon and there left to die. For some days a courageous woman, Margaret Clement, who had been brought up in the household of Blessed Thomas More, kept them alive by putting food in their mouths. But her visits were finally stopped, and one by one the martyrs died of starvation and exhaustion. Thomas Cromwell's creature, Bedyll, reported to his master on June 14 that they "be almost dispatched by the hand of God." Five were then already dead; two at the point of death; two were sick, and one was "whole." One of the sick survived the ordeal, and waited four more years before he won his crown at Tyburn. Many years later, when Margaret Clement lay dying in Malines, an exile for the faith, she told those around her "that the time of her departing was now come, and she might stay no longer, for that there were standing about her bed the Reverend Fathers, Monks of the Charterhouse, whom she had relieved in prison

in England, and did call upon her to come away with them."

To Newgate, not long after, came Blessed John Forest, the Franciscan, confessor of Queen Katherine of Aragon, who had spent part of his religious life in Greyfriars, the celebrated house of his Order that lay close to the prison and which was so loved by Londoners. In an old and tattered habit he was drawn on a hurdle from the prison entrance on the south side of the gate to Smithfield, where he was to be burned alive. But that is the story of Smithfield rather than of Newgate.

Under Elizabeth, Newgate was always full of Catholics, at first lay-folk for hearing Mass, then priests of Queen Mary's time who had persisted in celebrating the Holy Sacrifice, finally "seminary priests" in ever-growing numbers. The first of the Elizabethan martyrs, Blessed John Felton, who had nailed the Papal Bull excommunicating Elizabeth to the door of the Bishop's Palace near St Paul's, was brought here after his trial and condemnation. On the morning of his martyrdom in St Paul's Churchyard he came down the steps of Newgate "in his satin doublet," and told the great crowd that "he was going to die for the Catholic faith, and because he acknowledged the

primacy of the Sovereign Pontiff and denied the pretended Queen to be the supreme head of the Church." Then he lay down on the hurdle and was drawn away to death.

Among deaths in Newgate itself which took place under circumstances which may or may not be held by the Holy See to constitute martyrdom, was that of John Jetter, a youth, who, after being tortured in the Tower on both the "Scavenger's Daughter" and the rack, on which he lay "smiling at his tormentors," was sent to Newgate, where he was fettered in such a way that his flesh was eaten away with the constant chafing of the irons. He was then confined in the hideous dungeon called "Limbo," which Father Henry Garnet, S.J., thus described: "It is a place underground, full of horrors, without light, and swarming with vermin and creeping things. It is impossible to see there without candles continually burning, and there is neither bed nor chair unless the persons provide for themselves." As a result of this treatment his whole body became swollen by the filth of the place, and he fell into consumption, from which he died. Father Warford, who knew him, wrote of him: "Though but a youth he showed more than a man's courage."

In this same Limbo was afterwards confined

Father Robert Southwell, S.J., whose poetry, known to Shakespeare and delighted in by Ben Jonson, has numbered him in the company of the great Elizabethan singers. A few years later, Ven. James Duckett, the intrepid bookseller, who died for disseminating Catholic books, was confined here also, so heavily ironed that he had to wear a pad of list round his neck to help him to support the weight of his fetters. As Limbo was at times used as a hold for condemned prisoners, it may have been here that Ven. William Harrington, a secular priest, converted five or six felons, "whereof two or three," according to a contemporary account, "might have been reprieved from the gallows if they would have denied what they professed there." That happened in 1594, and in the same year we find Father Robert Southwell writing: "Some Catholics have died in Newgate overcome by the stench of the prisons."

A little earlier than this, two interesting laymen, both subsequently executed, were imprisoned here. One was Ven. Thomas Felton, martyred son of a martyred father, a youth of twenty-one, who was brought to Newgate from Bridewell, where he had been lamed by excessive flogging. He, too, was thrown into Limbo, and lay there in

shackles for fifteen weeks before he was brought out to be condemned. The other was Ven. Nicholas Horner, a poor tailor of York, elderly and simple, suffering from a diseased leg, who had come to London to get medical treatment. His zeal for the faith soon got him into trouble, and he was committed to Newgate, lying in Limbo till his leg was past all cure and had to be amputated. During the painful operation he refused to be held or tied down, but continually repeated the prayer, "Jesus increase my pains and increase my patience." After a brief spell of liberty he was brought back to Newgate charged with helping and succouring a priest, the precise offence alleged against him being that he had made a jerkin for Ven. Christopher Bayles, the Fleet Street martyr. Here in Newgate he was comforted by a vision, as he told a fellow-prisoner, Mistress White: "In the night there was a great light in his chamber, and an angel did come and comfort him." Space does not allow of many stories of Newgate martyrs and confessors, but there is one memorable scene which may not be omitted. It happened in the days of James I, when more latitude was allowed to prisoners in some respects. It was the eve of the martyrdom of Ven. Thomas Somers, a Douay priest, whose

missionary labours had won for him the title of "the parish priest of London," and the well-known Benedictine, Ven. Dom John Roberts. A little party of Catholics met in the prison at a last supper in honour of those who were to die on the morrow. At the head of the table sat the heroic Spanish lady, Doña Luisa de Carvajal, who had left Spain and security in order to minister to persecuted Catholics in London. The two priests were placed on either side of her, and some twenty people sat round the board. There was a spirit of Christian gaiety in the air, when Father Roberts had some misgivings, and said to Doña Luisa: "Do not you think I may be causing disedification by my great glee? Would it not be better to retire into a corner and give myself up to prayer?" To whom she made reply: "You cannot be better employed than in letting them all see with what cheerful courage you are about to die for Christ."

One beautiful martyr of Newgate was Ven. John Goodman, who was reprieved by King Charles I, to the great indignation of Parliament, whereon he petitioned the King to allow him to die lest his reprieve should make trouble between the King and his people. One cannot tell here of the many priests, secular and regular, who died

in Newgate under the Commonwealth. But we may end by recalling that at the time of the Revolution the prison doors of Newgate opened to receive three Bishops—John Leyburn, Bonaventure Giffard, and Philip Ellis, three of the Vicars-Apostolic appointed under James II, in whose Court they had a few months before appeared publicly in cassock and pectoral cross. In the first days of the Revolution they passed from palace to gaol.

Newgate has vanished, and the broad, level roadway of Newgate Street sweeps over the site hallowed to us by so many sacred memories.

## VIII—HOLBORN

LONDON has its *Via Sacra*. Along this Sacred Way a yearly procession now walks in prayer and supplication from Newgate to Tyburn, along the road over which more than 100 of our martyrs passed to a glorious death. Every inch of that journey through Holborn, High Holborn, Bloomsbury High Street, and Oxford Street is holy in our eyes. It is the Martyrs' Way, venerable in itself and endeared to us still more by other associations of Catholic life before and after the age of martyrdom.

Before we begin our pilgrimage from Newgate, rich in memories of martyrs and confessors, it may be well to endeavour to reconstruct in our mind's eye this thoroughfare as they knew it. Outside the massive stone gate, flanked by its prisons, stretched what was originally a country road, passing down Snow Hill to cross the Fleet River, and then ascending Holborn Hill, which in after days was to be called "the heavy hill to Tyburn." Until the reign of Elizabeth this road was very little built upon, except around Newgate itself and at one or two spots such as Hatton

Garden and the end of Chancery Lane, where the Templars had a house as early as 1118 or thereabouts. From there it was simple country till the village of Bloomsbury was reached. During the Middle Ages houses had been built thickly as far as the Fleet, and dwelling-places gradually extended along the thoroughfare. But even in the time of Ralph Agas, who drew his carefully detailed map some time shortly before the year 1570, there was but a single row of houses on each side of the highway as far as Drury Lane. Behind these were farms and fields. After leaving Bloomsbury the Tyburn Road, now Oxford Street, crossed open country with thick forest land stretching away to the north. At Marylebone, where the Tyburn brook crossed the road by the side of Marylebone Lane, the Corporation of London had a sort of shooting-box, where they feasted after hunting over what is now Regent's Park and the surrounding neighbourhood.

The grim and dreary place of execution itself stood at the cross roads where Watling Street cut across the Tyburn Road on its way to Westminster.

We leave Newgate, then, by the broad and level street which runs across Holborn Viaduct, recalling the fact that medieval and much more

recent travellers had to make their way down Snow Hill past the Conduit erected in days when it was a good and charitable deed to secure an adequate water-supply to the neighbourhood, over the narrow stone bridge which crossed the Fleet and was known as Oldbourne Bridge. Just as Fleet Street took its name from the Fleet Bridge, so Holborn, or Oldbourne, was called from this one. Then came the steep ascent up Holborn Hill, the summit of which was reached where Brook Street now runs. From there to Holborn Bars the street was called Holborn simply. High Holborn began at the Bars and continued till the top of Drury Lane. If we figure these localities as a broad highway, with a single row of houses on either side, running between fields, gardens, and orchards, we shall form some picture to ourselves of Holborn as the martyrs knew it.

Standing midway on the Viaduct we shall be approximately over the site of Oldbourne Bridge. On our left we see the church of St Andrew's, Holborn, built by Wren to replace the medieval church, on the site of which in Saxon days a chapel already stood. It is mentioned as a landmark in a charter by King Edgar. The old church stood out boldly half-way up the hill. In the Middle Ages it belonged to the Abbot and monks

of Bermondsey, who still owned it at the time of the dissolution of the monasteries. It was rebuilt during the fifteenth century, and part of the present tower dates from that time, as may be seen from the Gothic arches still standing. In connection with this church was one of the medieval grammar-schools, founded, I think, in the reign of Henry VI. In the churchyard is the resting-place of one of our martyrs, Ven. Swithin Wells, the sturdy Hampshire gentleman who at the age of sixty was hanged before his own door at the Holborn end of Gray's Inn Lane for harbouring Ven. Edmund Genings and other priests. Edmund was apprehended at the altar and was carried along Holborn to Newgate still wearing the sacred vestments. Swithin Wells was not present at the Mass, but was arrested and condemned to death. He had been a sportsman in his day, and as they led him out to martyrdom he spied an old acquaintance in the crowd, to whom he called out: "Farewell, dear friend! farewell all hawking, hunting and old pastimes; I am now going a better way." When the execution was over, his body "was worshipfully by his friends buried in St Andrew's Churchyard in Holborn."

Opposite St Andrew's Church stood "certain inns and other fair buildings." Among these

possibly stood some of those Holborn inns which priests used as lodging-places in the days when they prayed that they might not be captured in a private house for fear of what would happen to their kind hosts. Two of these Holborn inns, the "Exchequer" and the "Bell," must, however, have been nearer Newgate, for when Ven. Thomas Holford escaped from the pursuivants who were holding him prisoner in one or other of these houses, waiting for the City gates to open in the morning, he made a dash for liberty past the Conduit on his way to Gray's Inn Fields. In his hurry to escape, the tall, burly, black-haired martyr dashed out with a yellow stocking on one leg and his white boot hose on the other, and in this guise hurried along Holborn till he reached the seclusion of the fields, where he removed his incongruous footwear and escaped barelegged to Uxendon Manor at Harrow-on-the-Hill.

Passing along to Holborn Circus, we find on our right Ely Place, in which is the only ancient Catholic church which has been restored to Catholic worship. St Etheldreda's, once the domestic chapel of the Bishops of Ely, whose town-house stood here, is now the church of the Fathers of the Institute of Charity. It was built in 1297, and, after having been diverted to other

uses for over three hundred years, was reopened as a Catholic church in 1876. Among the fragrant memories of Holborn should be numbered the apostolic ministry of Father William Lockhart, Inst. Ch., an Oxford convert, through whose exertions this chapel was reclaimed, and who spent the last sixteen years of his admirable life here, dying in 1892.

Ely Place was a stately pile of buildings standing in the midst of its gardens, orchard, and vineyard. The gate-house fronting on Holborn was built by Thomas Arundel, afterwards Archbishop, first of York, then of Canterbury. - Here died John of Gaunt, "time-honoured Lancaster."

Among the great prelates who filled the see of Ely, and who therefore would have occasionally occupied this delightful residence, were the future Cardinals Langham, Bouchier and Morton, each of whom became Archbishop of Canterbury, and Bishop John Alcock, founder of Jesus College, Cambridge. The last Catholic bishop was Thomas Thirlby, one of the "Eleven Bishops" thrown into captivity by Elizabeth and dying as confessors of the faith.

The same Queen compelled her Anglican Bishop of Ely to surrender the estate to the Crown, using the famous threat: "I who made you what you

are, can unmake you.” She then gave it to her favourite, Sir Christopher Hatton—like his colleagues, a steady persecutor of Catholics—who lived and died there. From him it was called Hatton House, whence the name of the adjacent Hatton Garden, once a real garden and famous for its roses.

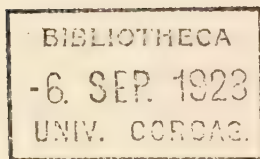
Adjoining Ely Place was Ely House, where the distinguished Spanish lady, Doña Luisa de Carvajal, spent the last months of her saintly heroic life. For nearly nine years she, by her own choice, lived in London, an exile from Spain, succouring the persecuted Catholics, visiting and helping the imprisoned confessors for the faith, and converting many Protestants. Twice she suffered imprisonment, and from her second captivity she was only released through the pertinacious efforts of the Spanish Ambassador, the Count de Gondomar, who carried her from prison to his house here, and here it was she died on January 2, 1614.

It is a far cry from the splendid pomp of the medieval prelates of Ely to the humble bishops who, as Vicars-Apostolic of the London district, almost surreptitiously ruled over the flock from 1688 to the restoration of the hierarchy. But close to Ely Place is a somewhat dingy street, now

called Furnival Street, but formerly known as Castle Street. It lies on the south side of Holborn. In a modest three-storey residence, now a restaurant, two of the Vicars-Apostolic lived and died. Their address was "No. 4, Castle Street," in playful allusion to which the Bishop and his chaplains were sometimes referred to as "the gentlemen of the Castle." Bishop John Douglass came to live here in 1790, and in these humble headquarters he received the exiled members of the French hierarchy and other *émigré* clergy who took refuge in London during the French Revolution. While living here he founded St Edmund's College, where he now lies buried. He died in this house, and was succeeded by Bishop William Poynter, who was Vicar-Apostolic from 1812 to 1827, and who also died here. Five years later it was given up and a more suitable house taken in Golden Square.

Very different from the beautiful chapel in Ely Place, with its traceried windows, was the small room in Castle Street in which these hidden and disguised Bishops, still forced to wear lay dress in public, offered the Sacrifice of the Mass, and sometimes held ordinations. Many priests who during the first part of the nineteenth century founded missions and built churches in London

and the South of England received their priesthood, as appears from the Bishop's registers, in this obscure street of Holborn. A short way farther, and we come to Holborn Bars, where Holborn ends and High Holborn begins, but that subject must be reserved for the following paper.



## IX—HIGH HOLBORN

A SMALL obelisk bearing the City arms marks the division between Holborn and High Holborn, and shows where Holborn Bars, like Temple Bar, originally marked the boundaries of the "Liberties of the City."

At this spot condemned criminals being carried to Tyburn for execution were allowed to stop and drink a cup of ale or cordial prepared sometimes by their friends, and sometimes by charitable people willing to render this service to these unhappy ones. When Ven. James Duckett, the bookseller, sentenced to death for having Catholic books in his house, came to this place his wife brought a pint of wine. In the cart with him was Peter Bullock, the man who had betrayed him and now was to die with him, having failed to save his own life. The martyr, having drunk, desired his wife "to drink to Peter Bullock and freely to forgive him, for he, after all his hopes, was in the self-same cart carried also to execution." So the betrayer and the betrayed passed in charity to their death.

The old houses in front of Staple Inn, which

are said to date back to the year 1500, with their gables, beams, and lattice windows, looked down upon this scene, and our martyrs' eyes have rested on them during their last journey. They also witnessed actual executions, for three of the martyrs suffered death here or close by in Gray's Inn Lane itself. The first was Ven. Alexander Blake—one old account gives the quaint contraction "Saunder Blake"—who was hanged for harbouring priests in Gray's Inn Lane. He seems to have been a poor hostler who had sheltered a priest, Ven. Christopher Bayles, in his house, but very little is known about him. Stow, in his chronicle, records his execution as taking place on March 4, 1590. The other two to win their crowns in this place were Ven. Swithin Wells, of whom mention has been made in connection with St Andrew's, Holborn, and Ven. Edmund Genings, the young priest of twenty-four, whose most attractive character has been described at greater length than is usual with contemporary chroniclers. On the Octave day of All Saints in 1591 he was celebrating Mass in the presence of two other priests, three laymen, and Mistress Wells, the lady of the house. Topcliffe and his pursuivants broke in just about the time of the consecration; the laymen, after a scuffle in which

Topcliffe was flung down the stairs, succeeded in holding the door of the room till Mass was over. Then all surrendered, and were led away to Newgate. The whole company was sentenced to death, though Mistress Wells, to her grief, was reprieved, and lingered on a prisoner in Newgate till she died in 1602. Although Swithin Wells was away from home at the time of the occurrence, he too was arrested and sentenced with the rest. As an example to the neighbours it was decided that he and Edmund Genings should be executed together in front of his own door. The other priests and laymen were carried on to Tyburn. The house would seem to have been in Gray's Inn Lane, quite close to Holborn, if not adjoining it. At the scaffold Topcliffe bade Swithin Wells look upon the young priest. "I see him well," he replied, "and I thank God that ever I did know him. Good Father, give me your blessing"—which the priest did. With a prayer that God should make him "of a Saul a Paul" he forgave his persecutor. Edmund Genings died first, and a bystander has recorded that "all the people in my hearing much pitied him, for that he was of a comely and gentlemanly countenance, fair and young, of great courage, showing no fear at all of death, but thanking God that he had lived until

that time to die for Christ's cause." It was December 10, 1591.

Passing Gray's Inn we may recall that two more martyrs, Ven. Hugh More and Ven. Henry Walpole, S.J., have their names on the list of members of that ancient foundation, both having studied law there. A less pleasing memory is that of Thomas Cromwell, the suppressor of monasteries and slayer of the Carthusians, who was also a Gray's Inn man. During the eighteenth century chambers were taken in the same Inn for the purpose of housing the library belonging to the secular clergy. The chambers were occupied by a priest who took charge of the library. Dr. Charles Fell, whose real name was Umfreville, author of *Lives of the Saints*, a work in four volumes, which was greatly disapproved of by his brother-priests and which ruined him by its failure, died there in 1763. Bishop Milner, as a young priest, also resided there on his first arrival in London in 1777. Books which formed part of this library were afterwards kept at Moorfields, and many of them are now in the library of Westminster Cathedral.

Behind the Inn lay Gray's Inn Fields, which in Elizabethan days was a place where Catholics resorted for the purpose of meeting priests, as

they could safely hold converse in this retired spot without much risk of observation.

At the Holborn end of Chancery Lane, between that thoroughfare and Southampton Buildings, lies the site of the first London "Temple," where the Knights Templars established themselves on their introduction into London in 1118. As has already been stated in the account given of Chancery Lane, it was afterwards acquired by the Bishops of Lincoln, and thus became the scene of St Hugh's death-bed. The name "Southampton Buildings" recalls that at the Reformation this property passed to the Earls of Southampton and was called Southampton House. This building must be distinguished from the later residence bearing the same name, which was on the north side of Bloomsbury Square. To this Southampton House Shakespeare must have come to pay court to his patron, Henry Wriothesley, the third Earl. Here also came young Anthony Babington and the other high-spirited youths who became involved in his conspiracy against Elizabeth, in company with John Ballard—Camden's "silken priest in a soldier's habit"—who went disguised as "Captain Fortescue." They were leaders of fashion, these youngsters of high social standing and good fortune. Some were really implicated

in the plot; others were involved through mutual friendship, like gallant and affectionate Chideock Tichbourne, who was found guilty because he had not saved his allegiance to his Sovereign by betraying his friend Tom Salusbury. He it was who wrote, on the night before his execution, the verses sometimes attributed to Raleigh, "My prime of youth is but a frost of cares," with the haunting refrain, "And now I live, and now my life is done!"

Because they had met in Southampton House, when the time for execution came they had to die just opposite it, in the north-east corner of Lincoln's Inn Fields. Fourteen died in all, including Ballard the priest and handsome Anthony Babington himself, with his haughty ambition and brave heroism in death.

On the other side of Holborn stood one of the largest Elizabethan inns—the "Red Lion." Red Lion Street still indicates the site. It was in a chamber over the gateway of this inn that this same John Ballard had some short years before his death reconciled to the Church a young man named John Hambly, who was to die as a martyr the year after Ballard died as a traitor. When Hambly returned to London as a priest, after ordination beyond the seas, he returned to this neighbourhood, staying sometimes at the "Red

Lion ” and sometimes at the “Blue Boar,” another famous Elizabethan inn, which stood on the south side of High Holborn, the entrance being where No. 270 now stands. While lodging in these inns Ven. John Hambly met Ven. John Cornelius, *alias* Mohun—the Irish martyr-priest whose real name we now know was John Conor O’Mahoney. He also frequented this district, and arranged for Hambly to say Mass in Gray’s Inn, as we know from the confession extorted from the latter under fear of torture. After yielding to this extent of giving information which he should have concealed, John Hambly recovered his courage, and, refusing all conformity, went to the scaffold, suffering at Salisbury in 1587.

Red Lion Street and the surrounding neighbourhood were much frequented by Catholics in the eighteenth century. At one time Bishop Challoner lived in this street, having come there from Devonshire Street. At a later period he moved up into Lamb’s Conduit Street until he finally took up his abode in Gloucester Street, where he died. It was here that the mob sought for him during the Gordon Riots, when the frenzied and drunken rabble surged up and down these narrow streets howling for the “popish Bishop ” to come forth that they might chair him

in derision, and threatening to roast him alive. He lay in hiding all that night, and finally was carried by his friends to Finchley, where he lay safe. But the "Ship Inn" in Turnstile, where he used to preach, was destroyed, and the mob wrecked the house of Mr. Doughty in Devonshire Street, thinking it was the Bishop's lodging. Finally, the rioting was stopped in this quarter by cordons of soldiers drawn up across High Holborn.

A little way past Newton Street the broad thoroughfare seems to branch off into two—New Oxford Street going straight ahead and High Holborn branching off on the south side. Where New Oxford Street now rolls its spacious way formerly was a network of narrow streets, courts, and lanes, all part of Bloomsbury and once the scene of Bishop Challoner's pastoral labours.

But if you would follow the martyrs' way you must keep to High Holborn till it ends with the top of Drury Lane. From there the martyrs passed through Broad Street and High Street, Bloomsbury, getting back to Oxford Street by the corner of Tottenham Court Road. But in their time Holborn was a suburb, High Holborn almost a country road, Bloomsbury a village street, and after that heath and furze, with scattered farmsteads, all the way to Tyburn.

## X—THE STRAND

### (I) EAST OF WATERLOO BRIDGE

ONCE it actually was a strand, and the path which ran along the high ground bordering the river developed into the street which we know. Seven hundred years ago this path was already known by the name which we use to-day. "In vico qui vocatur La Straunde" is the legal description of it in the time of King Henry III. In very early days there was nothing between this country thoroughfare and the river but river-banks covered with black mud at low tide. Gradually this swamp was reclaimed, and afforded room for houses and gardens. To the north of the road lay the gardens and fields granted by King Edgar to the Westminster monks. The name Covent Garden denotes the site of the old convent gardens, and the office of *The Tablet* is on soil which once provided vegetable produce for the refectory at Westminster.

All through the Middle Ages the Strand was merely a country road with these gardens and fields to the north, and a row of episcopal town-

houses to the south—for this was where many of the Bishops lodged, for the reason given by Selden: “Anciently the noblemen lay within the City for safety and security; but the Bishops’ houses were by the water-side, because they were held sacred persons whom nobody would hurt.” The Strand did not become a street in the strict sense of the term till the time of Henry VIII, when an Act of Parliament was passed for “paving the streetway between Charing Cross and Strand Cross.” Strand Cross stood somewhere near the present approach to Waterloo Bridge, but our pilgrimage along the Strand must begin farther east, outside Temple Bar.

First, we come to the Church of St Clement Danes, of which Carlyle wrote: “That Church of St Clement Danes where Johnson still worshipped in the era of Voltaire is to me a venerable place.” It is venerable, too, for marking the site of a far older church, taking us back, as the name shows, to the Danish era of our national story. A very old tradition, recorded by Strype, holds that “when the Danes were utterly driven out of this kingdom, and none were left but a few who were married to English women, these were constrained to inhabit between the Isle of Thorne (that which is now called Westminster) and Caer Lud,

now called London." There they built a church, known as St Clement Danes to distinguish it from St Clement's, Eastcheap. The old Catholic church survived the Fire, but was pulled down as unsafe in 1680 and replaced by the present church designed by Wren's pupil, Edward Pierce.

On the south side of the church is Essex Street, where, on land belonging to the Knights of St John of Jerusalem, the Bishops of Exeter had their town-house. The last Bishop to use it was James Turberville, one of Elizabeth's "Eleven Bishops," who died in durance for the sake of the old religion.

Between the next turnings, Milford Lane and Arundel Street, stood Arundel House, the birth-place of the martyr, Ven. Philip Howard, Earl of Arundel and Surrey. Before the Reformation it had been the town-house of the Bishops of Bath, and thus had some illustrious owners, including Cardinal Adrian de Castello, Cardinal Wolsey, and Gilbert Bourne, another of the "Eleven Bishops."

Ven. Philip was born here on June 30, 1557; here, in later years, he was examined by Privy Councillors sent by the Queen when he was in trouble for his religion; and here in his own house he was confined a prisoner in 1583 and 1584. In

the following year he left it in an attempt to escape abroad, but was arrested at Lymington and carried to the Tower, where he spent the rest of his life. The names of the streets round Arundel Street—Norfolk, Surrey, Howard—all recall the connection of the neighbourhood with his family.

When we come to the large area now occupied by Somerset House we get in touch with a much earlier period. Somewhere here, on a site which cannot be identified, there was in the early Middle Ages a chapel dedicated to the Holy Innocents, beyond which lay a cemetery. This chapel afterwards became the original church of St Mary-le-Strand, which was pulled down by Protector Somerset to make room for his "large and goodly house" in 1547. A new church of St Mary-le-Strand was afterwards built on the island site which it still occupies. This ground, in earlier days, had been a green with a maypole, as commemorated by Pope in the *Dunciad*.

Close to the original church stood the town-houses of the Bishops of Worcester and Chester, both demolished by Somerset to make room for his new buildings. Chester Inn was occupied by the Bishops of Lichfield and Coventry.

The house belonging to the See of Worcester

could not have been used by the Bishops for a considerable number of years, as for nearly half-a-century the See had been held by a succession of four Italian prelates, resident in Rome, one of whom, Giulio de Medici, became Pope, and, as Clement VII, refused to declare the nullity of King Henry's marriage with Katherine of Aragon. Hugh Latimer, apostate priest and schismatical bishop, afterwards held it, but the latest name one can think of with reverence in this connection is that of Richard Pates, who in early life took part in the Council of Trent and was subsequently deprived by Queen Elizabeth, and imprisoned. He died a confessor of the faith in 1565.

To build his huge house Protector Somerset demolished the great cloister on the north side of St Paul's Cathedral, frescoed with the "Dance of Death," in order that he might use the stones and other material; but before his house was finished he himself had been beheaded, having expended a sum exceeding a hundred thousand pounds in our currency on a dwelling which he was never to see completed. Somerset House then passed to the Crown, with the unexpected result that it became for very many years one of the chief Catholic centres in London. For, in Stuart days, it was settled on the Queen as a

separate residence, and thus two Catholic Queens, Henrietta Maria and Catherine of Braganza, occupied it in turn.

When Charles I settled it upon Henrietta Maria in 1632 he commissioned Inigo Jones, himself a Catholic, to design and erect a Catholic chapel for the Queen's use. When the existing Somerset House was built (1776-1786) the tombs of some of the Queen's French attendants were found built into cellars underneath the great square. As these interments in all likelihood took place beneath the chapel, we are probably correct if we surmise that this chapel stood somewhere within the spacious quadrangle that exists to-day.

The Queen's Chapel was much frequented by London Catholics for many years. Father Richard Blount, a well-known Jesuit, who had spent a long and adventurous life in England, was buried there in 1638, and it is quite likely that he was not the only priest to find a resting-place in the vaults. When the Civil War broke out, the chapel was closed, and at least one of the chaplains, a distinguished secular priest named John Jackson, was carried off to Newgate, where, after he had been sentenced to death for his priesthood, he was allowed to linger till he died a captive for the

Faith. He was said by his contemporaries to have been confessor to Queen Anne of Denmark, consort of James I, whom they believed to have been received into the Church by Father Blount just mentioned. But the fact of this conversion cannot be regarded as proved beyond dispute.

During the Commonwealth, Inigo Jones, in extreme old age and much harassed by heavy fines for his religion, ended his days here. After the Restoration Henrietta Maria returned as Queen-Dowager and took up her residence at Somerset House, reopening the chapel which the great architect had built for her in the days of her power thirty years before. But she left England again in 1665, and when the Papal Envoy Agretti wrote a report on his visit to London in 1669 he had to record: "The oratory of the Queen Mother is closed. Its situation was near the thickly populated part of the town, and was, therefore, very convenient for Catholics residing in that neighbourhood. It is hoped that it will soon be reopened for Mass by Her Majesty on pretext of her retiring sometimes to Somerset House as the Queen's own palace." He speaks very highly of Queen Catherine: "The Queen is altogether given to devotion, recites daily the canonical hours, and pays special attention to the adornment of the

church and to the observance of the sacred rites."

In the following year there came from Rome another envoy called Airoidi. From his report we learn that Somerset House is being prepared, not for the Queen, but for the Portuguese Ambassador; and that the chapel will again be opened. But in the end the Queen did come into residence, paying frequent visits there during the latter years of Charles II, and dwelling there altogether after his death. It was in her chapel there that she honoured specially the memory of the martyrs who died on account of Titus Oates and his pretended plot. Many of them she had known personally, and it is quite possible that some had said Mass in her chapel. It was there that she enshrined the relics of Ven. William Ireland, S.J., which emitted a heavenly fragrance. In her room she kept the portraits of the five Jesuit Fathers who were martyred together at Tyburn—the portraits which the conscience-stricken King used to kiss when he entered her room, entreating their pardon for his act in signing their death-warrants, and affirming that they now in glory knew how he had been forced to this act.

When James II ascended the throne the practice

of the Catholic religion became public once more, and Queen Catherine was able to give Catholics the opportunity of being present at High Mass and Vespers. When the Pope once more gave Catholic Bishops to England, one of them, Dr. James Smith, formerly President of Douay, and now first Vicar-Apostolic of the Northern District, was consecrated in the chapel at Somerset House. He was a personal friend of the Queen, who gave him as a consecration gift the magnificent silver crosier which was afterwards seized by the Protestants and is now preserved in York Minster, where, in these later days, it is even represented as being the pastoral staff of the Anglican Archbishops of York. In the outbreak of Protestant fury which broke out at the Revolution of 1688, the poor Queen had once more to close her chapel. She greatly desired to return at once to Portugal, but William III persuaded her to remain till 1692, when she left this country to become regent in her own land. With her departure the Mass ceased at Somerset House, and the chapel in which the Blessed Sacrament had for so many years been honoured was left empty and deserted till its demolition eighty years later. Catherine Street, which runs down to the Strand on the north, alone perpetuates the name of this

holy Queen in this neighbourhood where she lived, suffered and prayed for so long.

NOTE.—I am indebted to the kindness of a correspondent of *The Tablet* who, with much learning and abundant references, corrected two mistakes into which I had fallen in my original article in the issue of February 9, 1924, which errors I have corrected in the text of this volume. Chester Inn had nothing to do with the schismatical Bishops of Chester, as I had supposed; and Bishop Pates of Worcester did not escape abroad but died a prisoner in London. The latter fact I should have remembered, as it had come to my notice. The blunder may perhaps be regarded as excusable, the more so because so well-informed a writer as Fr. Chandlery, S.J., has been led into the same mistake. (*Tower to Tyburn*, p. 70.)

## XI—THE STRAND

### (II) WEST OF WATERLOO BRIDGE

**O**N leaving Somerset House we come immediately to the site of the "Savoy," which during its long existence was successively palace, ruins, hospital, Jesuit school, and finally something not far removed from a slum. It has all disappeared except the ancient Chapel Royal of the Savoy, which nestles in the heart of what is now a commercial quarter. It extended from ground now covered by the west side of Somerset House as far as Savoy Hill, Savoy Street marking the central gateway.

As we recall its history we see in our imagination quite a pageant of medieval life, with saints, sovereigns, soldiers, statesmen, and poets passing in quick succession. But the story of the Savoy is a long one, and needs a paper to itself.

Next to the Savoy was the town-house of the Bishops of Carlisle—a line of prelates much immersed in our diplomatic relations with Scotland. The last of them was Owen Oglethorpe, who consented to crown Elizabeth, but refused

to omit the elevation in the Mass at her bidding. He died in captivity not many months later. After the Reformation it passed to the Earls of Bedford, and finally came into the possession of Edward, Marquis of Worcester, and so was once more in Catholic hands. In his youth the Marquis, then known as Edward Somerset, Earl of Glamorgan, was the envoy sent by Charles I to Ireland to conduct negotiations with Archbishop Rinuccini, the representative of Pope Innocent X. The envoy, being a good Catholic, and anxious to further the King's cause, undertook, on His Majesty's behalf, that no Protestant should in future be appointed Lord Lieutenant, that the Irish Bishops should be admitted to their seats in Parliament, and that certain churches and ecclesiastical revenues should be granted to the Catholics. A copy of this treaty, found on the dead body of the Archbishop of Tuam in 1645, was published and promptly brought Somerset into disgrace. For the King repudiated his authority, as having exceeded his commission, and he was committed to prison for many years. At the Restoration he recovered his property, including this Strand mansion, Worcester House as it was then called. The rest of his life he devoted to scientific research of considerable

value, suggesting among other things a calculating machine and foreshadowing the invention of a steam pumping engine. But he never lived at Worcester House, which he lent to Lord Clarendon, the great Chancellor. Hence it happened that the marriage between the Duke of York, afterwards James II, with Anne Hyde came to be celebrated here. Both bride and bridegroom were in years to come to be received into the Catholic Church; so though this wedding was solemnized according to the Anglican rite it may here find a mention. The next Marquis of Worcester conformed to the Church of England, receiving the Dukedom of Beaufort as the reward of his apostasy. The old house, with its private chapel in which the Bishops of Carlisle and their chaplains had formerly said Mass, was pulled down in 1683. The Protestant Duke bought a new house at Chelsea, which he called after his new title, thus accounting for the Beaufort Street there, now associated in our minds with the Convent of *Adoration Réparatrice*, built on part of Blessed Thomas More's garden.

From the Bishops of Carlisle we pass to their neighbours, the Bishops of Durham. Durham House Street indicates the part of the Strand where stood Durham House, with its stately

Great Hall, the roof of which was supported by lofty marble columns. It was built by Thomas de Hatfield, "who was made Bishop of that see in 1345, and sat Bishop there for thirty-six years." Very great personages were these Prince-Bishops of Durham, with almost sovereign power in "Bishoprick." Their writ ran there instead of the King's; they stamped their crozier-head upon their coinage, and held courts of law in their own right. Their state called for a very spacious and dignified dwelling when, with their retinue, they came to London to attend Parliament or the Councils of the King. In the map drawn picturewise by Ralph Agas about 1560 we can discern a great pile of Gothic buildings with a gateway leading from the Strand to an outer court, from which men passed into the inner court with the house and chapel on the east side and the Great Hall running parallel with the river. Adjacent is a smaller building having an embowed window projecting over the water, and there were steps down to the water-side. In Stuart days all fell into ruin, and later the Brothers Adam reared the "bold front" of the Adelphi (now, alas! threatened in its turn) which looks out on the Thames on the site of Durham House.

In this splendid medieval residence, stretching from the Strand to the river, a long line of great prelates came and went. Here Cardinal Langley, Chancellor of England, entertained Henry V when he was still young Prince Hal, unsobered yet by kingship. Here dwelt his successors, Robert Neville, grandson of John of Gaunt, and descendant of kings, and William Sever, son of a poor sieve-maker. Then came Christopher Bainbridge, who, after a year, passed on to the Archbishopric of York and the Cardinalate. He was to die in Rome, poisoned, it was believed, by an aggrieved servant. Next was wealthy Thomas Ruthall and that greater Thomas—Cardinal Wolsey—whom Durham never saw during the six years he held the see. The last Catholic Bishop to come and go by these steps to the water-side was Cuthbert Tunstall, who lived through all the successive changes of religion under Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary and Elizabeth, sometimes ruling as Bishop, sometimes dispossessed, finally dying in captivity for his faith. One of his official acts was to convey Durham House to Henry VIII in exchange for other houses in London. The King's will in such matters always prevailed. Thereafter we find French Ambassadors lodging there till

Edward VI granted it for life to his sister Elizabeth. On Mary's accession she made other arrangements for her sister, and restored the house to Bishop Tunstall. When he was deprived of the temporalities of his see by Elizabeth, the Queen again took possession of her old home. She let Sir Walter Raleigh dwell there, and he used as his study "the little turret that looked into and over the Thames, and had the prospect which is as pleasant perhaps as any in the world"—so writes Aubrey.

But the Catholic memories of this spot had not yet ended, and the Mass was again to be said in Durham House. In the year 1626, soon after the accession of Charles I, the French Ambassador was occupying the chief portions of the mansion in the inner court, and we find the Privy Council making great complaint, "there being daily resort of multitudes of English subjects of more than a hundred at once to Mass at the French Ambassador's in Durham House, not only when the Ambassador himself was there, but also when he was retired into Greenwich." Instigated by the Privy Council, the Bishop of Durham issued a warrant in pursuance of which "pursuivants, constables, and others" were posted in the Strand and also "without the walls and water-stairs of

Durham House on the water side " so as to arrest the Catholics as they came out from Mass on Sunday, February 26, 1626. Then a pretty brawl ensued. For " the followers of the French Ambassador took upon them with their swords in their hands to carry the English Papists by strong hand through the watch." Much scuffling and some sword-play followed. A thrust with a rapier missed the pursuivant at whom it was aimed, and nearly killed " Sir John Bath, an Irishman, thought to have come out of the house from Mass." Next arrived " the inhabitants of the street with bills and clubs " to rescue the officers, when suddenly the Bishop of Durham appeared on the scene and withdrew the Protestant forces. Then he had a stormy interview with the Ambassador, in which the latter flamed out, saying " that he wished his followers had killed the officers, and that he was sorry they had not killed some of them, and that the King His Majesty should require reason of the King of England for that which was done against the Law of Nations, and that he expected no subject of England should be troubled for coming to Mass in his house." After which outburst the Bishop subsided, and no further notice was taken of the affray. The Ambassador gained his point and

the account ends: "the officers were so willing to humour the Ambassador that wittingly they suffered the Ambassador's servants to let Englishmen Papists out at ye water gate by six, eight, ten, twelve boatfuls at once, without apprehending them."

Yet another account mentions two victims who did not so escape—two Englishmen suspected to have said Mass in Durham House Chapel the previous Friday. They were apprehended in an ale-house in the Strand and were committed to prison.

Next door to Durham House stood a smaller and less interesting building called York House, though it had, in fact, only a very brief connection with the Archbishops of York who, through the Middle Ages, had occupied an earlier York House on the site of the palace of Whitehall. As an act of restitution for her father's deed of sequestrating Whitehall from Cardinal Wolsey, Queen Mary gave to Nicholas Heath, the last Catholic Archbishop of York, a house in Southwark which he exchanged for this one, formerly the town-house of the Bishops of Norwich. Two years later he left it, a prisoner, for the Tower, and the house was given to Sir Nicholas Bacon, whose famous son, Francis, was born there before the year was out.

The imprisoned Archbishop was offered his liberty if he would promise to attend the new Church services. He refused. "As for my reasons for refusing," he said, "the Council has often enough heard me explain them in Parliament; and they may all be summed up in this: Whatever is contrary to the Catholic faith is heresy; whatever is contrary to unity is schism."

With this uncompromising declaration ringing in our ears we leave the Strand, in which so many Catholic Bishops once dwelt, all sharing that faith for which Archbishop Heath died dispossessed of his see. Very fitly it ended, by the village of Charing, at the steps of the great Cross.

## XII—THE SAVOY

**I**N making our way down the Strand we paused to notice the site of the Savoy, the scene of so much varied history that it calls for a separate description. And as the Strand in these days is no fit place in which to pause and dwell on the past, it is better to turn down Savoy Street till we come, on our right, to the Savoy Chapel, looking very tiny amid the tall buildings surrounding it. There, pacing the quiet little churchyard or sitting in the old chapel, we may with more recollection and greater safety try to see again some of the interesting events that happened in this corner of London. Here we shall meet some of the highest and noblest, living in splendour and security; and we shall recall violent scenes of ruin and destruction, murder and sudden death.

We first call up him from whom the place took its name—Peter of Savoy, a princely adventurer, uncle of five queens, and as one of them was Queen of England he made his way here, one of the horde of foreigners so welcome to our weak Henry III, much to the discontent of his wisest

counsellors. St Edmund of Canterbury, who had strongly opposed the King's liking for foreigners, was now dead—succeeded in the see of Canterbury by one of them, Boniface of Savoy, Peter's own brother. When Peter himself arrived, he easily obtained from the easy King a grant of the manor "in the street called La Straunde." On his death abroad in 1268 he left the Savoy to the friars of Mountjoy, who sold it to Queen Eleanor of Provence, the consort of Henry III. To this house each of the Queen's sons in turn brought their bride—Prince Edward coming with Eleanor of Castile, and later his brother Edmund Crouchback, Earl of Lancaster, with Blanche, Queen of Navarre. But it was to the second son, the Earl of Lancaster, that Queen Eleanor gave the Savoy before she left the world, after her royal husband's death, to become a nun at Amesbury. This association of the Savoy with the Earls and later the Dukes of Lancaster led to its official connection with the Duchy of Lancaster, an appanage of the Crown, and accounts for the fact that the chapel in the Savoy is still one of the Chapels Royal.

Earl Edmund enlarged and beautified his palace, and here he is said to have planted the first red roses grown in England—red roses from

Provence, afterwards to be the cognizance of his Lancastrian descendants. From him it passed to his son Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, the headstrong opponent of Edward II, who after his execution in 1322 was the subject of a spurious cultus as "St Thomas of Lancaster." Pilgrimages were made both to his tomb and to his picture hung up in St Paul's. The King desired the Bishop of London to stop this demonstration in the Cathedral on the express ground that it was "without the authority of the Roman Church." Some years later Queen Isabella wrote to the Pope pressing for the canonization, but her request was refused and the cultus, such as it was, died away. The first lines of a hymn in his honour indicate that the grounds of his veneration were national rather than religious:—

Gaude Thoma, ducum decus, lucerna Lancastriae,  
 Qui per necem imitaris Thomam Cantuariæ  
 Cujus caput conculcatur pacem ob Ecclesiæ  
 Atque tuum detruncatur causa pacis Angliæ.

His successors continued to add to the property, and wealth accumulated within the stately walls. It became a fit lodging for kings, and the Earls came to be Dukes. The Strand had now grown into a very busy thoroughfare for carts and horses bearing merchandise and food-stuffs to the

market at Westminster. Along this highway, still muddy and full of ruts, in spite of repeated efforts at paving, rode Edward the Black Prince, modestly mounted "on a little black hackney," escorting his prisoner, the King of France, on a white steed with very rich trappings. The captive monarch was lodged in the Savoy until his removal to Windsor Castle. Later he returned and here he died and had a great funeral, before his body was carried back to France.

Next comes the striking figure of John of Gaunt. He married the heiress of the last Duke, and thus succeeded both to the Savoy and the dukedom of Lancaster, and we witness several stirring scenes. We may see Geoffrey Chaucer coming to the beautiful house, with its turrets, pinnacles and vanes, to receive the annuity granted to him by the Duke from the revenues of the Savoy. Here, too, comes Wycliffe, under the ducal protection, much to the indignation of the citizens of London, who sided whole-heartedly with their popular Bishop, William Courtenay, with results subsequently fatal to the Savoy. Not foreseeing the coming storm, John of Gaunt builds himself a chapel here, dedicating it to his patron saint, John the Baptist. Here he keeps royal style, claiming the title "King of Castile and Leon."

He also, as regent, grants himself as subject a chancery for his duchy of Lancaster, and many famous men, including Blessed Thomas More, were to hold the office of Chancellor of the Duchy there.

In 1376 the Good Parliament is meeting in London. The Black Prince and William of Wykeham are impeaching the friends of John of Gaunt. Bishop Courtenay summons Wycliffe to appear at St Paul's, whereon the Duke goes in person to threaten the Bishop with personal violence. Next day great crowds pour out of the City down on the Savoy, clamouring for the Duke and his friends, who chance to be away and so escape. But an unfortunate priest is so ill-treated in the street that he subsequently died. The Savoy is threatened by the crowd, when the Bishop suddenly appears, summoned from the dining-table by news of the riot. Calling on them to remember the sacred season of Lent, and begging them "by the love of Christ" to desist, he succeeded in preventing further violence, for that day at least. But it was only for a time. Four years later sees the rising of the Commons under Wat Tyler and Jack Straw. It was on Corpus Christi Day that the rioters took possession of London, the Kentish men pouring in over London Bridge, Essex and Hertfordshire rolling

along through Mile End. Citizens of London join in, and for a time no harm is done. Then the hatred for John of Gaunt incites them to an attack on the Savoy. He was absent, and only a few servants remained. The attack was made from the Strand. The serjeant-at-arms was killed trying to hold the gate. The mob surged through the building, wrecking and destroying. An unhappy Franciscan who served the Duke as his physician was quickly slain. Some burst into the cellars and drank there at their will, till they found they were imprisoned by a fall of masonry. This was caused in the ruin brought about, it is believed, by three barrels of gunpowder being cast into the fire which was consuming all the valuables. For seven days after, it is said, their piteous cries could be heard, but no one could or would bring help. The chronicler sardonically observes: "They went to drink wine, and perished in wine." The rioters forbad all looting. Everything was to be destroyed on the spot. One delinquent, observed to secrete a silver cup, was thrown alive into the flames. By Corpus Christi night the Savoy was a blackened ruin, and a ruin it remained for a hundred years and more. What could be saved from the wreckage in the way of lead was taken for use at Hertford Castle. The

Duke himself lived his remaining years and died at Ely Place. Some sort of prison was afterwards built among the ruins, and a record of the time of Henry VII tells how the gaoler got into trouble for allowing the escape—"escapium sive evasione-m"—of a prisoner.

Henry VII, niggardly in life, was profuse in charity at death, and by his will he established the Savoy as a hostel "to receive and lodge nightly one hundred poor folks," with priests to assist them both spiritually and materially. There is provision for "beds fully garnished for the said hundred poor men, books, chalices, vestments, altar clothes, altar tables and other implements." Rules were laid down and a body of trustees appointed, whereof Blessed John Fisher of Rochester was one.

The trustees built a stately pile shaped like a cross, with a chapel on the site of John of Gaunt's first chapel, served by four chaplains in addition to the Master, who was to be a priest. It was dedicated to our Saviour, the Blessed Virgin, and St John the Baptist. Pope Leo X granted a plenary indulgence in connection with it. But this noble charity, nobly conceived and nobly endowed, had a very short period of real usefulness. When the new religion came in under Elizabeth,

it was exploited by a greedy adventurer, and in time came to be a sinecure held by a Master, who neglected his duties, until in 1702 it came to an inglorious end. One of these Masters was the notorious apostate de Dominis, ex-Archbishop of Spalatro, who soon wore out the welcome of his Anglican admirers by his unblushing greed for preferment.

Under its neglected state all sorts of unauthorized people sought free lodging there, and the persecuted Catholics found it a convenient refuge. In 1626 we find the Master directed by the Secretary of State to raid the place, "where Mass is usually said and much resort of people to it," to arrest the priests and to seize "all the Popish books and massing-stuff that shall be found there."

The last Catholic "memory" of the Savoy is of the days of James II, who gave a part of the building there to the Jesuits for a school. Macaulay writes of this: "It was not improbable that the new academy in the Savoy might, under royal patronage, prove a formidable rival to the great foundations of Eton, Westminster and Winchester. Indeed, soon after the school was opened, the classes consisted of four hundred boys, about one-half of whom were Protestants." Then

the Revolution came; the Fathers fled, the boys were dispersed. This Jesuit school in the Strand became a memory.

Before we leave the Savoy Chapel, we may glance at the brass which records the burial here of two Catholic Bishops. One was Thomas Halsey, who, though he was Bishop of Leighlin in Ireland for eight years, never set foot in his diocese. He was a creature of Wolsey, and once penitentiary of St Peter's. His epitaph—a fine specimen of the double meaning—says of him that “while he lived, he lived well.” The other was the noble Gawen Douglas, Bishop of Dunkeld, translator of Virgil, a fine Scottish poet and a good priest. These two prelates, so dissimilar in life, died in the same year, 1522, it is thought of the plague, and now lie in the same tomb.

Other Catholic dead lie beneath and near the chapel for whom we may breathe a prayer, while not forgetting one to whom, and not for whom, we may pray. This is the martyr, Blessed Adrian Fortescue, who came to this little house of God four hundred years ago to keep the “month’s mind” of his first wife. Fifteen Masses he caused to be said that day within these walls for the repose of her soul. That was in 1518, twenty-one years before he won his crown.

### XIII—LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS

TO include the wide space of Lincoln's Inn Fields under the heading of streets is perhaps open to criticism, but there can be no doubt as to the abundance and diversity of the "Catholic Memories" which have gathered round this great area. To begin with, like all this part of London, it once belonged to the monks of Westminster by virtue of the grant made to them by King Edgar. Then came a time when it was owned by the Red Cross Knights, who settled at the Old Temple in Holborn soon after 1130. In a medieval plan it is described as *Campus Templariorum*, but its popular name was Fikates or Fitchett's Fields. And "fields" in the literal sense were here as late as the time of Queen Elizabeth. They stretched out on the south nearly as far as St Clement Danes. When Lincoln's Inn was built by the Earls of Lincoln as their town-house on the site of the old Dominican Friary in Chancery Lane it was natural that the fields adjacent thereto on the west should be called Lincoln's Inn Fields. Those to the south, where New Square and Carey Street now are,

were known as Little Lincoln's Inn Fields. When the Knights Templars moved to the New Temple by the riverside, their fields here were acquired by the Crown. Edward II gave the property to his unhappy favourite Hugh le Despencer, who did not hold it long. When Elizabeth was queen there was a single row of houses on the north separating the Fields from Holborn, and a few scattered buildings well away to the south.

The part of the fields now covered by New Square and Carey Street was used occasionally as a place of execution, and it may be that there, rather than in Lincoln's Inn Fields as existing to-day, we should place the martyrdom of Ven. Robert Morton and Ven. Hugh More in 1588. The former was a priest, born in Yorkshire, who had studied for the priesthood at Douay, Rheims and Rome. He was captured in London, and his friend, Richard Martin, who had entertained him, was also martyred, the evidence against him showing that he had paid sixpence for the priest's supper. But even to give a meal to a priest at that time was to bring the offender within the law against helping or harbouring seminary priests. Robert Morton is described as ruddy of complexion, having hair and beard "inclining to red."

With him was hanged Hugh More, a Lincolnshire gentleman, brought up a Protestant, but reconciled to the Church. While studying for the priesthood at Rheims his health broke down and he returned to England to recover his strength. But an information was laid against him and he was condemned and executed "for being reconciled to the see of Rome by one Thomas Stevenson, a Jesuit."

During the first years of the seventeenth century houses were built all round the fields, thus enclosing the square as it is to-day. It was a fashionable quarter, and very great folks continued to dwell there for nearly two hundred years, though the open space before their windows was given to disorder of all kinds. Here horses were exercised, bulls baited, dancing bears exhibited, and in the evenings mountebanks addressed the rabble. It was a favourite spot for beggars, cripples and idlers of every description, so that the phrase "a Lincoln's Inn mumper" passed into a proverbial expression. It long continued an extremely dangerous neighbourhood.

The west side of the square has most interest for Catholics, for here stood the Sardinian Embassy and its chapel, which, as "SS Anselm and Cecilia," survived till our own times, and will be

remembered by many. The very site is now hard to identify, as it has been obliterated by the colossal buildings, commercial in character, which have for ever ruined the old-world dignity of Lincoln's Inn Fields. But many of my readers will still recall the heavy archway, shaped like a horseshoe, which led to Duke Street, afterwards Sardinia Street. The house on the left of this archway was the Sardinian Embassy, and bore on its front the rose and fleur-de-lys. But long before it became the embassy the house over the arches had been in Catholic hands, for during the reign of James II the Franciscans obtained a lease of it and opened a chapel there. The house and the archway were designed, as was all the west side of the square, by a Catholic architect, the famous Inigo Jones, who designed so many beautiful buildings, and who in extreme old age was fined so heavily for his religion.

Even before the Franciscans came, Mass had been said close by, for in Duke Street the Jesuit martyr Ven. William Harcourt had lodged—in the first house on the left. Daily for many years he had prayed for the grace of martyrdom, and at length his prayer was heard and he suffered as one of the victims of the Oates plot in 1679.

The Franciscans had only been settled there for a year when the Revolution broke out, and their house was at once attacked by the mob. One of the last acts of authority which James II exercised before his flight was to send troops to protect them. But it was in vain. The King fled and the friars had to follow his example. Their house and chapel were destroyed by the mob, and in the British Museum there are two medals to be seen which were struck to commemorate this attack. Each bears on the reverse a representation of the ruined house over the archway, and in the foreground rioters surround a huge bonfire in the centre of the fields. Macaulay summed it all up in two sentences: "The buildings were demolished. Benches, pulpits, confessionals, breviaries were heaped up and set on fire."

The house was rebuilt, but there is no record of its fortunes for the next thirty years. About 1720, or soon after, it became the Sardinian Embassy, and in that capacity was a centre of Catholic life and worship all through the eighteenth century, because the Embassy chapels were exempt from the provisions of the law prohibiting Catholic worship. To this place Catholics could safely come for the Sacraments and spiritual help, for the Ambassador supported seven chaplains. On

Sundays High Mass and Vespers were sung amid rich and costly accessories. Very frequently Bishop Challoner preached here, and there is an old engraving of him preaching in mitre and cope before the altar. But to this preaching the Government soon objected, holding that sermons in English were in no way necessary for Sardinian officials. So the Bishop then hired a room at the Ship Inn in Gate Street close by—still existing in a repaired and rebuilt condition—where in lay dress he, sitting at a table amid his hearers, preached to them, each person present having a mug of beer before him, so as to afford some pretence of a convivial meeting in case of interruption by the officers of the law. But though he could not preach in the Embassy he could, and did, still say Mass and give Confirmation there.

Two celebrities who were members of the congregation were the clever, eccentric sculptor, Nollekens, who was baptized there in 1737, and Dr. Thomas Arne, composer of "Rule Britannia," who wrote two Masses for this chapel. Though Arne had not been a very exact Catholic during his life, he always kept up his relations with the clergy, and finally made a good end, having received the last Sacraments, on March 5, 1778.

Chapel and house were burned by accident in 1759, and again maliciously destroyed during the Gordon Riots, when the destruction of 1688 was repeated on a yet larger scale. On this occasion the Blessed Sacrament was saved and carried to the "Ship" for safety, and the valuable altar-plate was rescued by a good woman, one Mrs. Roberts; but the altar, seats and other fittings were dragged out into Duke Street and burnt there.

The chapel was soon rebuilt and became famous for the eloquent sermons of Dr. James Archer, one of the leading preachers of his day. As a boy he had been employed at the "Ship," but Dr. Challoner, struck by his promising dispositions, sent him to Douay to study for the priesthood. One of his constant hearers was Charles Butler, the first Catholic to become a King's Counsel, who was one of the leading men of the congregation for over forty years.

The associations of the old chapel are extraordinary in their diversity. It was there that Fanny Burney was married to General d'Arblay in 1793 by Father Juliaens, a Franciscan; great operatic singers like Grisi and Lablache sang there on festivals, when the chapel was noted for its music; later on we catch a glimpse of young

Monsignor Pecci, afterwards Pope Leo XIII, saying Mass there; in 1836 we see the chapel besieged by crowds anxious to hear Dr. Wiseman give his lectures on "The Principal Doctrines and Practices of the Catholic Church"; King Victor Emmanuel attends Mass in solemn state, not yet excommunicated for the work of 1870. Nor can we forget the devoted apostolic labours of the good Italian priest, Dr. Faa di Bruno, author of the popular *Catholic Belief*. It is a full and eventful history, and fortunately has been set out in full by Miss Harting in her valuable introduction to the Lincoln's Inn Registers published by the Catholic Record Society.

Passing northward up the west side of the square, on our way to look at the "Ship," we pause before the corner house—the stately mansion which was Newcastle House, but before that Powis House. Its later name came from the Duke of Newcastle, who was Prime Minister to George II. Lord Somers also lived there for a time when he was Lord Keeper. But we go back to the time when it was built, in 1686, by William Herbert, Earl of Powis, head of a staunch Catholic family, father of Lady Lucy Herbert, Abbess of the Augustinian nuns at Bruges, and Lady Nithsdale, who with such clever daring

rescued her husband from the Tower of London. During the first two years of its existence Powis House was the resort of many priests, and Mass was frequently said there. At the Revolution the Earl of Powis followed his sovereign into exile, and his house was forfeited to the Crown.

Farther along in Gate Street stands the little Ship Inn, with its memories of Challoner and Archer and secret Masses and sermons. Down the dreary passage opposite, incongruously called Whetstone Park, a place once of ill-name and scandalous reputation, there was another hidden Mass-house also frequented by Bishop Challoner.

And close by is the new church of SS Anselm and Cecilia, built to replace the venerable old one which had to be demolished to make room for Kingsway. It is heir, indeed, to most sacred traditions, but you will find nothing in it of greater interest than the old altar from the Embassy chapel, with the precious altar-stone that came from the Lady Chapel at Glastonbury and was handed down, Heaven knows how, through the persecution days. As we stand before it, in the southern aisle, we may recall the scene in the old chapel on July 6, 1909, when the last service was held there. Those who were present speak of the touching sight witnessed at

the end of the last Benediction, when the congregation arose and with one accord spontaneously filed before the sanctuary, each one present kneeling to kiss the floor of a chapel that had been so dear to them and their fathers, and which closed its doors for the last time, leaving its traditions to the new church in Kingsway.

#### XIV—STEPNEY GREEN

**R**IGHT at the heart of the East End lies Stepney, the oldest parish there. The manor of "Stebenhithe," as it was originally called, stretched from the very walls of the City out towards the Essex marshes. It is thought that there was some small "hithe" or harbour by the river which gave the place its name. Just as the West End of London was once St Peter's land, belonging to St Peter's abbey-church of Westminster, so most of East London was St Paul's land, being the manor of the Bishops of London. From Aldgate right away to the River Lea by Canning Town the country bordering the Thames so far inland as Hackney formed the manorial demesne. The manor-house, long used as an episcopal country mansion, was on Stepney Green. Here the Bishops in Saxon days built a little parish church, originally dedicated to All Saints. It stood on the high ground above the range of low cliffs which bordered the river. Between these cliffs and the river the tide used to flow in, leaving on the ebb great stretches of black mud, for the sea wall had not yet been built.

On the higher ground there were farms dotted about, and woods where the game lay; there was good fishing in the pools and marshes, and much good pasture land. The Isle of Dogs was a place noted for the grazing of sheep, which, it was said, fattened there better than anywhere else in England. The first worshippers in the Saxon church of Stebenhithe would have been farmers, fishermen, fowlers, huntsmen and labourers, all of them "Bishop of London's men." And in time among them came the gracious figure of St Dunstan, who held the see from 958 to 961. According to tradition, he rebuilt the little church of Stepney, and in later days, when he was a canonized saint, it was rededicated in his honour, so that it was St Dunstan's all through the Middle Ages, and it long continued the only parish church. At length the "white chapel" of St Mary Matfelon was built and gave a name to the new parish of Whitechapel.

At Stepney some very famous men filled the office of rector, though they do not appear to have been resident; for the parish is peculiar in this, that it had both a rector and a vicar. Probably this was due to the fact that the parish belonged in a very special way to the Bishop, and thus the rector was frequently some noteworthy man

engaged elsewhere in important affairs, so that the actual administration of the parish was left to a vicar. One of these rectors was Jean Gocelin, a Frenchman, who was called to Rome and made Cardinal Bishop of Albano in 1330. His immediate predecessor at Stepney, Stephen Seagrave, became Archbishop of Armagh some seven years earlier. Another rector of Stepney, Marmaduke Lumley, afterwards Lord High Treasurer of England, became Bishop of Carlisle in 1429, and was translated to Lincoln in the year of his death, 1450.

A still more famous prelate was Richard Foxe, the founder of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, who became successively Bishop of Exeter, Bath and Wells, Durham, and Winchester. He had been in early life vicar of Stepney, being appointed in 1485; but in those days he was too busy a diplomatist in European affairs to devote much attention to Stepney.

But one who not only was rector of Stepney but a resident and householder there in his own right, apart from his ecclesiastical office, was the great scholar, John Colet, friend of More and Erasmus, and founder of St Paul's School. His father, Sir Henry Colet, Lord Mayor of London, had a country house on Stepney Green, west of the

church there, which he left with all his other property to his son. One of John Colet's first preferments was the living of Stepney, and there is extant a letter written by Blessed Thomas More urging him to take up his residence there. At the date of this letter Colet was staying in some sylvan retreat where, as More says, "the beautiful landscape refreshes, the fresh air exhilarates, and the sight of heaven delights you." And he points out that all these pleasures may be enjoyed at Stepney—how different a Stepney from that which we know! "I would not have you so captivated by these charms as not to hasten back to us as soon as possible. For, if you dislike the town, yet your country parish of Stepney, for which also you must be solicitous, will afford you as many attractions as the place where you now are; and from thence you can now and then pass into the City, where you will find a great field of merit." There is no record of Blessed Thomas ever visiting his friend on Stepney Green, but it is pleasant to think of him making the short journey from his City home. When Colet founded his school at St Paul's he dedicated it to the Child Jesus, a beautiful dedication which has been quite lost sight of.

Among the Catholics who lie buried in Stepney

Church are Colet's father, Sir Henry Colet, who was Lord Mayor in 1486 and 1495, and Richard Pace, who succeeded John Colet both in the living of Stepney and the deanery of St Paul's. Pace was a priest who was one of Cardinal Wolsey's trusted agents, and his dispatches to his master, now preserved among the State Papers, are one of the most valuable sources for the history of the period. He, too, was a great friend of Erasmus. He died and was buried here in 1536.

Leaving Stepney Church for Stepney Green, we find that the spot, which once was a large common where pennyroyal grew in great abundance, is now represented by a thoroughfare leading in a north-westerly direction to Mile End Road. In the late Middle Ages it was commonly known as Mile End Green, because it ended the first mile from Aldgate. This name is found as early as the year 1232, and it constantly occurs in the plays of the Elizabethan dramatists. Shakespeare, in the *Second Part of Henry IV*, puts into the mouth of Justice Shallow the words: "I remember at Mile End Green I was then Sir Dagonet in Arthur's show," and Ben Jonson refers to these "devices" or pageants which were held there.

It was to Mile End Green that Wat Tyler's

mob of insurgents retired on June 14, 1381, after their day of looting in London and the wholesale murder of Flemings in the City. The boy-king, Richard II, rode out to them there and found himself with a few unarmed attendants surrounded by sixty thousand clamorous petitioners. Their just and reasonable demands were granted by the King, and the men of Essex and Hertfordshire retired well satisfied. But the more unruly elements under Wat Tyler marched on the Tower, seized the Archbishop of Canterbury, Simon of Sudbury, just as he had finished Mass, and led him to immediate execution.

In Elizabeth's time Stepney Green became the scene of three martyrdoms. This was in the year 1588, just after the defeat of the Spanish Armada. The Government, in order to strike terror into the populace, arranged for a series of executions of priests to take place in and around London. Lincoln's Inn Fields, Shoreditch, Clerkenwell, Holloway, Brentford, Kingston, and Mile End Green were chosen as the places for the public butchery of priests and laymen, who were no way concerned in the invasion, but who refused to deny the Pope's authority as head of the Church.

On August 28, Ven. William Dean, a priest, and Ven. Henry Webley, a layman, were brought

here in a cart, instead of on the usual hurdle, to suffer death. William Dean was a Yorkshireman, who for a time fell away from the faith and became a Protestant minister. Being reconciled to the Church by another future martyr, Ven. John Alfield, he went to Rheims, where he was ordained priest. On his return to London he began to exercise his office in Fleet Street, Thames Street, and elsewhere, but within a month was captured and lodged in Newgate. Under fear of torture he faltered to the extent of giving information about those who had heard his Mass. But he was left in prison for three years and then exiled. He promptly returned, and again was arrested, and this time sentenced to death. Why Stepney Green (or Mile End Green, as the records call it) was selected as the place we do not know. While on the way to the scaffold he desired earnestly to speak to the crowd around, but he was shouted down. When the cart pulled up under the gallows he again tried to address the people, but received a violent blow on the head from an officer's halberd and was gagged with a cloth thrust into his mouth, so that he was half-suffocated before his head was put into the noose. His companion, Henry Webley, was born in the city of Gloucester, and had been arrested on board

a ship in Chichester Haven about to sail for France. He remained in prison till his death two years after his capture. According to one account he had "aided and assisted" William Dean, which may account for their dying together. He was thirty years of age when he won the martyr's crown.

The last martyrdom on Stepney Green took place five weeks later, when another priest, Ven. John Hewett, *alias* Weldon, was hanged here. He was the son of a draper in York, had been ordained priest at Rheims, arrested on his return, and imprisoned in Newgate. The Queen remitted in his case the more barbarous parts of the sentence, and gave leave for him to hang till he died. "The less is my merit" was his comment. In the cart he was engaged by the ministers in disputation, and when they pressed him to recant he made the reply, remembered and noted down by Catholics present: "I have done nothing but as a Roman Catholic priest ought to do by the direction of our most Holy Father the Pope, being head of the Church . . . and in this Roman Catholic religion I will die and willingly shed my blood."

## XV—CHARTERHOUSE SQUARE

**I**N these days, when all London streets are either crowded with the most noisy and odoriferous traffic, or absolutely blocked by a dense wedge of massed vehicles, Charterhouse Square still manages to preserve some dignity, quiet, and sense of space. Thackeray wrote of it "with its blackened trees and garden, surrounded by ancient houses of the build of the last century, now slumbering like pensioners in the sunshine," and his description holds good to-day, except that the houses have added the best part of another century to their age, and have acquired some incongruous neighbours in the warehouses of more recent date. But in spite of the warehouses, the square remains a pleasant spot, and one can tarry there to recall ancient memories in comparative safety.

Naturally these memories centre round the Charterhouse itself, some of it still actually standing before our eyes, where the Carthusian monks for nearly two hundred years lived their life of praise, prayer and penance. The outer gateway, by which you enter the historic building,

is that built by the monks themselves, and under its arch Blessed Thomas More passed daily as he came and went during the time of his residence hard by in his early and unmarried days. Through that same archway passed the martyred Carthusians on their last journey to Newgate, and over it was nailed the severed arm of their Abbot, Blessed John Houghton. To-day it is surmounted by an eighteenth-century building which has replaced the "half timbered upper storey with a gable" which the monks knew, and it is now flanked by a little postern of modern character. But the archway itself, after all these changes, continues to hold its place on the London pavement of to-day—a most precious and venerable relic of our martyrs.

When the "Black Death" swept down on London in the fourteenth century, this neighbourhood of the Charterhouse was covered with quiet fields. In 1348, and again in 1362 and 1369, this plague ravaged London, and it is estimated that it claimed at least twenty thousand victims out of a population which probably did not then exceed fifty thousand, though contemporary records give considerably larger figures. The city graveyards were full, and it became necessary to provide new burying-places for the dead.

Naturally it was the Bishop of London who took the lead. Ralph de Stratford, who held the see during the period of the first visitation, bought a large field near Clerkenwell to serve as a burial ground, and his example was soon followed by Sir Walter de Manny, who purchased the adjoining land for the like purpose. This knight, one of the most brilliant figures in the court of King Edward III, was born in Hainault and came to England in the train of the new queen, Philippa of Hainault. His feats of arms are to be read in the chronicles of his fellow-countryman Froissart. Among other incidents, he took a leading part in the siege of Calais, and it was through his intercession that King Edward was persuaded not to slay the entire garrison but to accept the substitution of the famous six burghers, who were subsequently saved by Queen Philippa when Sir Walter's efforts to save them had failed. In later life he was one of the first Knights of the Garter, and was indeed "a very perfect gentle knight" in the best sense of the word. The land which he bought as a "New Church Hawe" belonged to the neighbouring hospital of St Bartholomew, and was known as "le spittle croft." It covered thirteen acres and the Charterhouse Square of to-day covers the centre of it, on which stood Sir Walter

de Manny's original chapel. John Stow tells us of the stone cross which he had seen there with this inscription:—"A great plague raging in the year of our Lord 1349 this Church-yard was consecrated, wherein and within the bounds of the present monastery were buried more than fifty thousand bodies of the dead: besides many others from thence to the present time: on whose souls God have mercy, Amen." The new chapel was dedicated to the Annunciation, and Manny's original intention was to found a collegiate church of twelve chaplains. But though he notified the Pope of his plan, it was never carried out; and we next hear that Michael de Northburgh, Bishop of London in 1361, is bequeathing money and devising land "to found build and complete, as soon as my executors are able, a certain house of the Order of the Carthusians according to the rite and manner of the same order, in the place called Newechurche Hawe, where there is a church of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which place together with the patronage of the same I have acquired from Sir Walter Manny, Knight." Pope Urban VI in a bull of 1378 couples Bishop Michael and Sir Walter de Manny as co-founders of the Carthusian house. The new foundation had already been received into the

Order at a General Chapter held at the Grande Chartreuse eight years previously, when John Luscombe, prior of Hinton, was appointed the first Prior of the London Charterhouse of the Salutation of our Lady.

In 1372 Sir Walter Manny died and was buried in the chapel here, his funeral being attended by King Edward III and many nobles. A few years later the Knights Hospitallers of St John of Jerusalem, whose great house at Clerkenwell close by was soon to be burnt in the disorders of the Peasants' Rising, gave to the Charterhouse four acres of contiguous land for "inclosing and making gardens for the cells of the prior and his friars." The relations between the Knights and the Carthusians were always intimate and friendly. The cells and gardens for which provision was thus made occupied three sides of a vast quadrangle. The buildings which remain are only the outer parts of the monastery, which were situated at the south-west corner of this quadrangle. They comprise the Little Cloister, a small court in which guests were lodged and entertained, their dining hall being on the north, their apartments on the east and south; the "Wash-house Court," in the brickwork of which appear the initials "I H," of great interest to us as probably standing for John

Houghton the martyred prior; and—most precious of all—the chapel.

All through the fifteenth century the quiet life of the Charterhouse continued in great fervour and strict observance, though the details of the individual lives of its inmates are lost to us. Of one, however, we have some record. This was the Irishman, William Tynbygh, who in his youth made pilgrimage to Jerusalem and was captured by Saracens, from whom he was miraculously delivered. Then he entered the London Charterhouse, and after thirty years of the religious life he became Prior in 1500. Of him his biographer wrote:—"This holy father was of so great holiness that for many years before his death rarely or never could he utter that most holy Evangel 'In the beginning was the Word' without ecstasy and rapture. He was taken up one time into heaven that he might there be permitted to hear ineffable words and to have sight there and recognition of many that had formerly been his dear friends on earth."

While William Tynbygh was living at the Charterhouse, Blessed Thomas More came to live near the Charterhouse that, as Erasmus says, "he might share in the vigils, fasts, and prayers and similar austerities" of the monks. In 1516

was professed Blessed John Houghton, an Essex man, twenty-eight years of age and already a secular priest. During the years that followed he lived in daily comradeship with the members of that splendid band of martyrs to be, Blessed William Exmew, his confessor, Blessed Sebastian Newdigate, who left the court of Henry VIII for the Charterhouse, BB. Humphrey Middlemore, Richard Bere, Thomas Johnson, and Thomas Green, priests; John Davy the deacon and six lay-brothers. Other members of the community there were—less fervent, one or two unedifying. Young Maurice Chauncey, of Hertfordshire, a generous soul but weak, was one of the latest to enter before the end came. John Houghton had become Prior in 1531, and it was he who was called to lead his community when the storm broke and they were called on to face the alternative of loyalty to the Vicar of Christ or disobedience to the King. In the little chapel there, still remaining except for one wall, which was demolished to make room for Sutton's addition in Protestant days, he gathered his community, and there took place the touching scenes which have so often been retold—the Prior's address, the general confession made by each one, his "long and most devout sermon," his public act

of asking pardon for his shortcomings from each one singly, the Mass of the Holy Ghost during which there came the wondrous mystical movement of the air. Maurice Chauncey, who was present, tells us:—"The Ven. Father Prior, touched by its sweet melody and sound, was overpowered with so great a fulness of divine illumination and abundance of tears that for a long time he could not proceed with the office of the Mass. The convent also stood astounded, hearing indeed a voice and feeling a marvellous and sweet operation in their hearts, but knowing not whence it came or whither it went."

The end came quickly. The Prior was led from the Charterhouse to the Tower and thence to Tyburn to die on May 4, 1535, the day we now celebrate as the feast of all the English Martyrs. His mangled arm was nailed up over the archway, to strike terror into the rest. The leading brethren were led away to prison and to death. An intruded prior took office. Then came the day of choice for the community as a whole. Some were unfaithful and weak. Chauncy unhappily yielded, and spent the rest of his long life grieving over his fall. Those who were faithful were carried to Newgate and starved to death there. The Charterhouse ceased to be

a charterhouse. It became first the town-house of Elizabethan noblemen, then the home of Sutton's foundation with its twofold object of educating the young and providing a kindly asylum for distressed old age. Out of it sprang one of the great English public schools. Its later history boasts some well-known names, Addison and Steele, Thackeray and Leech. John Wesley, too, was a boy there. One can hardly refrain from adding to its worthies Colonel Thomas Newcome, so real does this shadow seem to us of an older generation. These are all kindly memories, but they fade into the background when we recall the more vivid and heroic lives of the real Carthusians. When Pope Leo XIII beatified John Houghton and his seventeen companions in 1886, he thereby placed for all time the hallowed remains of the London Charterhouse among the sacred shrines of the world-wide church.

## XVI—BISHOPSGATE STREET

A SMALL tablet on a house at the corner of Bishopsgate Street Without and Houndsditch marks the site of the ancient City gate which gives the street its name. Beneath that archway ran the great highway to the north—the road that led from London to Peterborough and Lincoln, to York, Durham and Scotland. It is as old as London. Traces may yet be found in it of Romans and Saxons and Danes. Almost all the great ones of our history must have fared forth by it at one time or another during their mortal careers, so that one can easily people it with a ghostly procession of monarchs and statesmen, prelates and warriors, merchants and poets and simple folk of all generations. St Hugh of Lincoln and St William of York have ridden over the stones of Bishopsgate Street as they came and went from their distant sees. But all London streets can boast of the wayfarers. It is rather their own inhabitants and buildings which lend to each one its own special associations.

The Bishop's Gate in the City wall must always have dominated the thoroughfare. In

the earliest times the dead were carried out for burial outside the wall. Dim British legend tells that Nennius, brother of King Lud and Cassivelaunus, was buried here with his sword "the Yellow Death." The Romans made a great burying-place at Spitalfields, and this road, which led thither, was lined on either side by mausoleums. The Saxons made it a dwelling-place, and it became their North Ton, as is still evidenced by the name of Norton Folgate—which is the continuation of Bishopsgate Street. Probably the Saxon gate was a new gate which was erected near, but not actually on, the site of the Roman archway. An ancient tradition, which one would like to believe, records that it was St Erconwald, the great Bishop of London, who built it there. Whether this was so or not, it is certain that his successors the Bishops of London had no special interest therein, for the maintenance of it, which at first was undertaken by the City, later devolved upon the Hanseatic merchants—"the Almains of the Hanse." In medieval times, on the south side of the gate stood "a stone image of a Bishop with a mitre, long beard, eyes sunk and an old mortified face." Under this gateway Ven. William Gunter, Monmouthshire man and priest of Rheims, was drawn to his martyrdom at Shore-

ditch on August 28, 1588, while the crowd shouted the doggerel chorus: "This man for the Pope, is hanged with a rope." When told that, by an act of royal clemency, he was to be spared the bowelling and quartering which formed part of his sentence, he replied: "It is fit that it should be so; for I am not worthy to suffer so much as my brethren."

Two other martyrs are associated with Bishopsgate Street Within. Blessed Thomas More lived there at Crosby Place before he made his home at Chelsea, and his friend Blessed John Larke was parish priest of St Ethelburga's—the ancient church which still stands there, one of the few pre-Reformation churches which yet remain in London. Subsequent alterations have robbed it entirely of its medieval aspect, but you may still visit the actual building in which this holy martyr celebrated the divine mysteries and dispensed the sacraments to his flock, among whom he counted Blessed Thomas himself and his family. It consists of a nave and tiny south aisle built in the early part of the fifteenth century on the site of an earlier church; so that when John Larke came as rector in 1504, little thinking he was to die a martyr, it was about fifty years old. The churchwardens' accounts for Reformation times are still

in being, and record the sale in 1553 of all the church-plate and vestments that had been used at Mass by John Larke and his Catholic predecessors. The list includes "certain old copes, vestments, latten, wax, bothes, old serymony things," as also "three copes and other trumpery." Chalices, pyxes and censors all went. The Mass ceased and the Book of Common Prayer was introduced.

Two other Catholic churches which survived the Reformation and the Great Fire have since disappeared. St Botolph's, which stood opposite Houndsditch, became ruinous and was replaced by the present church, opened in 1729, and chiefly interesting by the fact that Keats was baptized there. Nothing very interesting about old St Botolph's seems to have been recorded, but it is noteworthy that there were four churches in London dedicated to this one Saxon saint, and all were built close to City gates, this one at Bishopsgate, and others at Aldgate, Aldersgate and Billingsgate. Somewhere I have read that St Botolph was a patron of travellers, and that our Catholic forefathers, beginning or ending a journey, invoked him on departure and arrival. The second church, that of St Martin, Outwich, has not only vanished, but has left no trace

behind. It stood at the corner of Threadneedle Street and Bishopsgate Street, and according to Stow it was founded by Martin, Nicholas, William and John de Oteswich. It was sometimes referred to as "St Martin's with the well and two buckets." The ancient Catholic structure was badly damaged in the Bishopsgate fire of 1765, and though it was patched up again for the time being, it was finally pulled down in 1796 to make room for a modern church, which in its turn has been destroyed. There yet remains St Helen's, with its double nave and twofold chancel, now forming one church, but originally consisting of the nuns' choir and sanctuary lying side by side with the parish church. This is most interesting to us as being the only pre-Reformation convent chapel now surviving in London. Even in Saxon times there had been a church of St Helen here, and in 1010 the relics of St Edmund, King and Martyr, were brought here from Bury St Edmunds for fear of the Danes, and here they were enshrined for three years. The convent of Benedictine nuns was founded here in the reign of King John, and stood where St Helen's Place now is. The nuns' refectory, which became the Common Hall of the Company of Leathersellers, existed till the very end of the eighteenth century. When

the convent was suppressed by Henry VIII in 1538 it was one of the wealthiest of the London religious houses. In that year the convent buildings were given to the nephew of Thomas Cromwell and the nuns driven from their home. All that now survives of their convent is the north aisle of St Helen's, where you may still see the arched doorway which led into the convent and the six-light hagioscope which afforded a view of the altar from the cloisters without. The building dates from the thirteenth century, though it contains much later work, as in Stuart times the church was repaired by the Catholic architect, Inigo Jones, who added the oak porches at the south and west, and in our own times much further restoration has been effected on the principle of putting the church back in its original condition so far as possible. It is remarkably rich in monuments, as those from St Martin Outwich were removed here when that church was demolished. Among others of interest to Catholics you will find on the epistle side of the sanctuary the tomb of Sir John Crosby and Alice his wife, who built Crosby Place, which became the residence first of Richard III, when he was Duke of Gloucester, and afterwards that of Blessed Thomas More. Sir John Crosby, after a dis-

tinguished civic, political and diplomatic career, died in 1475. In the side chapels are some interesting brasses, including two priests, John Brieux and Nicholas Wotton, who were rectors of St Martin Outwich in the fifteenth century.

Farther north there stood in Bishopsgate a priory of the Austin Canons, founded in 1197. Its southern boundary was Houndsditch, which actually was a wide stretch of running water in the ancient Roman fosse. It was so broad and deep that in 1337 poor little John de Redeburn, a boy, was drowned, being "swept down stream" while bathing. When the priory was established, there existed by the side of this watercourse the tannery of Alwin Hunne, whence came the name Hunnesditch, long since corrupted into Houndsditch. By Elizabeth's time Hunne had been forgotten so completely that Stow connects the name with the number of dead dogs which were thrown into the ditch. Long after Alwin the Tanner had passed away, his craft continued to flourish in this neighbourhood, and we find the "Skinners" formed into a brotherhood, which in the time of Richard II was known as "the Fraternity of Corpus Christi of the Skinners." They celebrated their feast by a great procession described by Stow, who tells us how on Corpus

Christi Day the fraternity marched bearing more than "a hundred lighted torches of wax costly garnished and above two hundred clerks and priests in surplices and copes singing." These were followed by various civic dignitaries, and last of all came "the Mayor and Aldermen in scarlet in their best liveries." So in imagination we can follow this Corpus Christi procession as it wends its way from Spitalfields down Bishopsgate into the City.

The Priory and Hospital of St Mary without Bishopsgate became popularly known as the "Spital"—whence the name Spitalfields. Another great foundation which originated in Bishopsgate Without was the Hospital of St Mary of Bethlehem, founded by Simon FitzMary, Sheriff of London, originally established as a collegiate church of canons, afterwards used as a hospital for mad folk, later on removed first to Moorfields and then to Southwark, where its name of "Bedlam" recalls, to those who know its history, its first beautiful dedication.

Somewhere in Bishopsgate Street Without stood, in Elizabeth's days, the first married home of Ven. Anne Line, the martyr, whose youthful husband Roger, and brother William Heigham, boys of nineteen, were arrested there while hearing

the Mass of her confessor, Ven. William Thomson, in 1585. The priest was martyred at Tyburn, the lads were sent to prison. It was Ven. William Thomson who promised Anne Line that if he obtained the grace of martyrdom he would pray in heaven that she might share it. Fifteen years after his death the prayer was heard, and the courageous widow, who had spent her life succouring priests, was hanged at Tyburn. Young Roger Line was worthy of such a wife. Father John Gerard, S.J., who knew him, says of him: "He had been heir to a fine estate; but his father or uncle (for he was heir to both) sent a message from his death-bed to young Line, then a prisoner for the faith, asking him to conform and go to some heretical church for once, otherwise he would have to give up his inheritance to his younger brother. 'If I must either give up God or the world,' was his courageous answer, 'I prefer to give up the world, for it is good to cleave unto God.' So both his father's and his uncle's estate went to his younger brother. I saw this latter once in his elder brother's room, dressed in silk and other finery, while his brother had on plain and mean clothes." The same writer tells us something of Anne's brother William Heigham. "It is twenty-six years since I knew him. He

## BISHOPSGATE STREET

was then a well-educated gentleman, finely dressed like other high-born Londoners. He supported a priest named Thomson, whom I afterwards saw martyred. As soon as his father learned that he, too, had become a Catholic, he went and sold his estates, the rents of which were reckoned at 6,000 florins yearly, that it might not pass to his son. The son was afterwards arrested for the faith, and he and his priest together, if I mistake not, were thrown into the prison of Bridewell, where vagrants were shut up and put to hard labour under the lash. I paid him a visit there, and found him toiling at the tread-mill, all covered with sweat."

Truly this story of these young people, so constant to the ancient faith as they came and went about their home in Bishopsgate, is among the noblest memories of this ancient and noble street.

## XVII—OXFORD STREET

THE road which leads to Tyburn, and which was the last stage of the journey so many of our martyrs made to the place of conflict and triumph, has a sacredness all its own. Apart from this character, which consecrates it in our eyes, there is not much in Oxford Street of special interest to us. For though it is a very ancient road, it is a comparatively modern street. The Romans first made it as a section of the great *Via Trinobantica*, which ran from London to the western country. But the history of its earliest houses and most of its by-ways only begins with the reign of Charles II, and it did not develop into a street until the early years of the eighteenth century. To its date it owes the fact that it is the longest street in central London without a church of any kind, save for the chapel belonging to the Royal Association in aid of the Deaf and Dumb.<sup>1</sup> Herein lies a marked contrast to Old London. In the City it is difficult to find a short street or lane which has not either a church or the memory of one; but then the City was built

<sup>1</sup> Even this building has recently (1925) been demolished.

in the ages of faith when the worship of God was part of the daily life of the citizens, so that they wanted their parish church at their door. In the days of the first Georges a large neighbourhood might come into being without much provision being either made or desired for buildings in which public worship was restricted well-nigh exclusively to the Sabbath day. So Oxford Street, child of its age, has a markedly unecclesiastical character. When the martyrs passed along it to Tyburn it was still a rough country road, bordered by fields, and infested at night by footpads and all sorts of bad characters. Soon after leaving St Giles's Pound, near Tottenham Court Road, the martyrs would pass on their right a country farm called Newlands, which occupied roughly the ground which lies between Newman Street and Wells Street, as far north as Union Street at the back of the Middlesex Hospital. This had belonged since the reign of Edward I to the old Leper Hospital of St Giles, which had been founded at Bloomsbury in 1101 by Matilda, the Queen of Henry I. It provided accommodation for fourteen lepers, one chaplain, one clerk and a servant. The administration of the hospital had been granted to the Hospital of Burton St Lazarus in Leicestershire. In 1539 both the Leicestershire house

and its dependent in Bloomsbury were suppressed by Henry VIII, and "Newlands," with much other property, was given to Henry's favourite, Sir John Dudley, afterwards Lord Lisle. This medieval farmstead, now covered with houses and streets, still constitutes one property, and is now known as the Berners Estate.

Past "Newlands" the Tyburn Road, as it was called, went on,—“a deep, hollow road and full of sloughs, with here and there a ragged house, the lurking-place of cut-throats,” as Pennant described it even so late as the eighteenth century. When it approached the place where New Bond Street now joins it, it sloped down a steep incline to a wooden bridge, only fifteen feet wide, which spanned the stream, the veritable Ty-bourne itself. The devious course of Marylebone Lane still follows the original meanderings of the stream. Once over the bridge, the martyrs would see on the north side the stocks, the pound for strayed cattle, and several conduit heads from which the City derived much of its water-supply before the completion of the New River. Standing back in an enclosed field was the Lord Mayor's Banqueting House, wherein the City Fathers refreshed themselves after a day's hunting in Marylebone Park. Stow recalls how in 1562

the Lord Mayor and Aldermen, having formally inspected the conduits, "hunted the hare before dinner, and after dinner went to hunting the fox, and the hounds killed him close to St Giles's church." After passing the Banqueting House the road sloped up till it joined Watling Street, and just beyond the junction stood "Tyburn Tree."

If the martyrs, bound closely to the hurdle, suffered in their journey over the cobble-stones of the City streets, they must have suffered still more from this long country road, full of ruts and sloughs, dusty in summer, muddy and foul in winter. It was a mile and a half from Bloomsbury alone. Several touching little incidents are related of the last journeys of the martyrs over this venerated road, though it is not possible to connect any with particular spots. It must have been close to Tyburn itself that, on the approach of Blessed Edmund Campion, bound to his hurdle at the horses' tails, followed by Blessed Ralph Sherwin and Blessed Alexander Briant tied together on a second, the cry went up from the expectant crowd: "But they laugh; they do not care for death." A gentleman, seeing Blessed Edmund's helpless plight, "most courteously wiped his face, all spattered with mire and dirt." Ven. Richard Leigh and his four companions

managed to pray aloud together—"They all sang their service by the way," reports Father Henry Walpole, S.J. Ven. John Roberts, the Benedictine martyr, and his companion, Ven. Thomas Somers, the secular priest whose zeal had won for him the name of "the parish priest of London," were stopped about sixteen yards from the gallows and kept lying there half-an-hour while sixteen criminals were fastened to the cross-beam. Hearing that this execution was over, Father Roberts said: "Then we shall die without company." To which a Protestant replied: "No, be of good cheer, gentlemen; they are not really dead, and you will die among thieves as your Lord did." The crowd was so dense that their hurdle could not be drawn up to the gallows, so they were unbound and walked the last yards on foot. Ven. John Almond passed along Oxford Street to his death "with his hands closed and erected towards heaven, and so continued in silence, prayer and meditation all the way, except that sometimes he spoke to those that were about him." Ven. Edward Morgan carried on a long conversation in Welsh with a Welsh footboy who had addressed him, and continued urging him to the service of God "till upon notice taken by the officers the footboy

was taken off." Of the Ven. Thomas Bullaker, O.S.F., we read that two of his penitents "walked by the side of the osier hurdle on which he was dragged to the scaffold, and this through roads everywhere deep in mud: these holy women frequently kissed the outstretched hands of the priest, and eagerly drank in his pious counsels." Father Southwell, S.J., one of the band of Elizabethan poets, was "haled upon a draw from Newgate, laid along upon straw, to the place of execution by Tyburn, having a cord fastened about the wrists of his arms. All the way he prayed with his countenance and eyes lifted towards heaven, and his hands as much as he might, and used not any speech, but was drawn *tanquam ovis ad occisionem*." In a contemporary account of the martyrdom of Ven. William Ireland, S.J., and Ven. John Grove, a layman, in 1678, we read that they were drawn to Tyburn on "a sledge" which was drawn by four horses adorned with red and white ribbons.

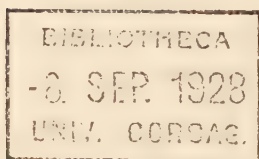
Altogether we know of one hundred and five who passed along this great thoroughfare to die for the faith, from the three Carthusian priors and their companions in 1535, to Blessed Oliver Plunket, the Archbishop of Armagh, who in 1681 was the last martyr to die at Tyburn.

Year by year in these present days a great procession of Catholics wends its way from Newgate to Tyburn along this same road of holy memories. Along the way itself there is nothing but the memories of the martyrs to recall. It is all theirs. To right and left, as we go, there are streets with later memories, but they do not belong strictly to Oxford Street. At the outset Soho Square lies to our left, with St Patrick's, and all that it stands for, from the days of its Franciscan founder, Father Arthur O'Leary, who transformed a dancing saloon there into a Catholic chapel. Farther along, on the same side, we know that a few minutes' walk will take us to Warwick Street, the ancient Bavarian Embassy chapel, and Golden Square, the home of the last Vicars-Apostolic of the London district. As we pass Great Portland Street, musicians may offer a short prayer for Karl Maria von Weber, who died at No. 91 there. When we come to New Bond Street we not only recall that here the martyrs crossed Tyburn brook, but also that, appropriately enough, we now enter a neighbourhood which for the past century and more has been specially connected with the spread of Catholic truth by means of the press. Thomas Booker, the Catholic publisher and bookseller who founded

the firm which did such long and useful service, lived at No. 56 and died there in 1793. Subsequently his grandson, Charles Dolman, occupied No. 61 in the early days of Queen Victoria, continued his grandsire's business, and issued the *Catholic Magazine* from that address. The well-known firm of Keating, Brown and Keating, who brought out the *Laity's Directory*, which was the forerunner of the *Catholic Directory*, had its home in Duke Street, Grosvenor Square. And when these good old firms were passing away, James Burns began the business so long known as Burns and Oates, which had a long association with Portman Street before it was removed to its present abode in Orchard Street.

Yet though all these streets, thus connected in our minds with the apostolate of the press, are tributaries of Oxford Street, they are not Oxford Street itself, and it must be confessed that this great western thoroughfare is singularly destitute of all Catholic associations, apart from that one of such heroic significance. As we make our yearly pilgrimage to the convent-shrine of the Blessed Sacrament at Tyburn, Oxford Street becomes once more the "Tyburn Road" leading to the Triple Tree standing gaunt and lonely against the sky-line. Along it for ever we see

pass the company which makes for the gallows there. The Sheriff and his gentlemen ride slowly on in leisurely state, while behind them the hurdle with its living burden is jolted and jerked at the horses' heels over the stony and uneven ground. And at Tyburn came the journey's end.



## XVIII—BROAD SANCTUARY, WESTMINSTER

TO give even a bare list of the great ones who have passed through Broad Sanctuary would be to outline a pageant of English history, its saints and sovereigns and statesmen; its soldiers, poets and painters. As we stand and look up at the Abbey we realize how impossible it would be to sum up its history within brief limits. But the Abbey church is still there for all to see. Let us rather peer into the past to see whether we can discern anything of what once was here and now is here no longer.

At first sight one might think that though the Abbey church is there the Monastery itself has vanished. But the Catholic pilgrim of to-day will find more than he probably expected if he passes through the archway into Dean's Yard. Close to the Abbey he will see the Abbot's House, and he may penetrate into its tiny court with the Abbot's Hall on one side, the "Jericho Parlour" on the Abbey side, and the "Jerusalem Chamber," where Henry IV was carried to die, in the north-west corner. Walking along Dean's

Yard towards the gate leading to Great College Street he will pass the old walls of what were formerly the "Calberge," the Cellarer's Hall and the Guest Hall. Passing out into Great College Street he will find there a long stretch of the old monastery wall still doing duty. Inside this wall was the Abbey Garden. The site of the orchard is marked by Orchard Street some way to the west. The Cloisters and Chapter House are open to inspection, and near the latter will be found the old infirmary with its picturesque little cloister. There have been countless changes and successive alterations, but a great deal of the original work remains, and it is not difficult for the imagination to re-people the dark doorways and obscure passages with the Benedictine monks of old.

Yet while all this has survived much has vanished. If the pilgrim returns through Dean's Yard and takes his stand before the west end of the Abbey in what is now an open space surrounding the monument to old Westminster boys who fell in the Indian Mutiny and the Crimea, he will be standing, as nearly as may be determined, on the site of the old Gatehouse. Therein many Catholics, including several martyrs, suffered imprisonment for the faith. Yet how few Catholics realize as they cross this space that they

are passing over holy ground! The Gatehouse was originally the principal approach to the monastery, and contained two great gates, one into Dean's Yard, the other facing Tothill Street. The buildings formed a quadrangle part of which was used as a prison.

It was in that prison that the last surviving monk of Westminster Abbey, Dom Robert Sigebert Buckley, lay a captive in 1607, when he was over ninety years of age and had outlived his monastery by nearly fifty years. It seemed as though with him would pass away the ancient Benedictine Order in England. But two secular priests, Robert Sadler and Edward Maihew, who desired to become Benedictines, having passed their novitiate in Italy, came to the Gatehouse to be professed by the aged prisoner, who thus handed on to the present English Province continuity with the medieval monks, when in his cell on this spot he received their vows.

Two of the martyrs already beatified, Blessed Thomas Sherwood, the young layman, and Blessed Luke Kirby, priest, were prisoners here, and nearly twenty of the Venerable Martyrs whose cause is now being examined by the Holy See followed them into captivity in this prison in later years. Somewhere in the neighbourhood

the persecutor Topcliffe had a house, wherein he tortured Ven. Robert Southwell, S.J., priest and poet. There the martyr "was hanged by the hands against a wall many hours together," not once only but "four several times," as we read in a contemporary letter.

This neighbourhood is indeed sanctified by the martyrs beyond all other spots, save perhaps Tyburn. For it was in Westminster Hall close by that many of them received sentence of death. Blessed John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester and Cardinal, heard his doom here; Blessed Thomas More, who had so often sat within these walls as Chancellor and judge, rose up there himself to receive sentence of death; the three Carthusian priors who with Blessed Richard Reynolds, the "Angel of Sion," and Blessed John Haile, parish priest of Isleworth, were our first martyrs, were also tried and condemned there. Others who followed them were Blessed John Larke, Vicar of Chelsea, Blessed Thomas Sherwood, of whom mention has been made, and many of the priests who suffered under Elizabeth. Of all that happened at these trials let us only recall the splendid outburst of Blessed Edmund Campion, who, when asked by the judge why sentence of death should not be pronounced, flamed out:—"It

was not our death that ever we feared. The only thing we have now to say is that if our religion do make us traitors we are worthy to be condemned; but otherwise we are and have been as true subjects as ever the Queen had. In condemning us you condemn all your ancestors—all the ancient bishops, priests and kings—all that was once the glory of England, the island of saints and the most devoted child of the See of Peter.”

These memories, however, lead us away from the Gatehouse and its gloomy prison. It had been built in the reign of Edward III and continued to serve as a prison till late in the seventeenth century, when the prisoners were removed to a new Gatehouse in King Street. Parts of the original Gatehouse were still standing when Victoria came to the throne.

On the south side of the Gatehouse stood some almshouses founded by Henry VII for thirteen poor men, of whom one was to be a priest “aged forty-five years, a good grammarian,” the other twelve to be aged fifty without wives. Every Saturday the priest received from the Abbot of Westminster the weekly allowance each inmate received for his support. They also had coal and faggots provided for their common hall and kitchen.

Near to this house and to the west of it was an old chapel of St Anne, the memory of which is preserved in the name of St Anne's Street close by. Close to it stood the almshouses founded by King Henry's mother, the Lady Margaret, for poor women. These almshouses were all suppressed at the change of religion, and in Stow's time Lady Margaret's almshouses were used as "lodgings for the singing men of the College."

Fortunately, St Anne once more has a chapel in this neighbourhood, for when the Catholic church in Orchard Street was opened in 1923, it was dedicated to her in reparation for the chapel which she had lost at the Reformation. The place where St Anne's chapel and Lady Margaret's almshouses formerly stood was called the Almonry, "for," says Stow, "the alms of the Abbey were there distributed to the poor." "And," he adds, "therein Islip, Abbot of Westminster, erected the first press of book printing that ever was in England, about the year of Christ 1471. William Caxton, citizen of London, mercer, brought it into England and was the first that practised it in the said Abbey, after which time the like was practised in the abbeys of St Augustine of Canterbury, St Alban's and other monasteries." Stow is here in error in giving credit to Abbot Islip

for fostering the new invention, for he did not become abbot till the year 1500. It was Thomas Mylling, Bishop of Hereford, who held the abbacy *in commendam*, to whom the credit was due. Caxton's house stood on the north side of the Almonry, and if tradition be correct it was a gabled four-storey structure with a quaint wooden balcony running the whole width of the third floor, which stood with its back against that of a house in Tothill Street, and which was not destroyed until 1845. The spirit in which this Catholic printer practised his craft is beautifully shown in the final words of his preface to the first English book which he ever printed. These words are the conclusion of a prayer to God that his work "may be taken in such place and time as shall be most needful in increasing of love and charity, which grant us He that suffered for the same to be crucified on the rood tree. And say we all Amen for charity."

Tothill Street, which lay to the back of Caxton's dwelling, ran down towards the west gate of the Gatehouse. To-day it is a most commonplace, uninteresting little thoroughfare, yet it carries us back to the first beginnings of Westminster, and its name enshrines memories of dim Saxon days and Saxon pagan worship. It marks the

original track or causeway which led across the marshy swamp to the ford at Thorney. This swamp, full of stagnant pools, was part of Bulunga Fen, which lay between the river and the line now marked by Piccadilly and Knightsbridge. It spread its shallow ponds over the ground now occupied by St James's Park and the grounds of Buckingham Palace. All this marsh was covered with water at high tides. Out of it rose the thorn-covered isle which the Saxons called Thorney. In Offa's charter of 785 it is called *Torneia in loco terribili quod dicitur Westminster*. The line of Tothill Street marks the approach to Thorney from the north. It long remained a desolate tract, and even so late as the eighteenth century it was possible to shoot wild fowl in the unoccupied land between St James's Park and the river. This dreary waste of a district was for centuries known as Tothill Fields. The name Tothill itself means a beacon-hill, and is believed to be connected with the worship of the Saxon god whose name still survives in our word "Tuesday." Tent or Toot hills were heights sacred to him, and later were found convenient for places of observation, whence the use of a verb "to toot," meaning to watch from a height. So the little Toot hill in our marsh near the ferry

to Lambeth was something of a landmark and gave its name to the surrounding fields. The curious bend eastward in Horseferry Road is thought to mark its side.

Tothill Street, which led to Tothill Fields as well as to the Abbey, being conveniently near the royal palace of Westminster, became quite a fashionable court quarter in the Middle Ages. The Bishops of Chester had their town-house here in the fifteenth century, as well as great peers of the realm. It also contained an ancient hostelry called *The Cock*, which derived its sign from the bird sacred to St Peter, where, according to tradition, the workmen engaged on building the Abbey church used to draw their pay in the days of Henry III.

To this, or some other inn in Tothill Street, came in the days of Elizabeth one of our martyrs, Ven. Nicholas Woodfen, whose real name was Wheeler. He was a Herefordshire man who had been ordained at Rheims in 1581, and who arrived in London in a state of great destitution. He seems to have been led to Tothill Street because a fellow-townsmen of his, a priest called Davis, was chaplain to Lady Tresham, who occupied a house there. The master of the house, Sir Thomas Tresham of Ruston, was at this time a

prisoner for religion in the Fleet. From his inn Nicholas Woodfen sent an appealing note to Mr. Davis asking for help. From Mr. Davis himself we learn what ensued:—"I came unto him who declared unto me, the tears standing in his eyes, that he had neither money to buy him any meat nor scarce any clothes upon his back. I pitied his case, comforted him, and gave him such money as I had then present; and afterwards acquainted him with Catholics in London; and by the help of Mr. Francis Brown, the old Lord Montague's brother, I got him apparel and furnished him in such sort as he took a chamber in Fleet Street near the Conduit, at one Burton a haberdasher's house."

This brotherly act of charity performed so long ago in Tothill Street set Nicholas Woodfen on his feet, and he was able to do two years' apostolic work in London as a priest before he went to his martyrdom at Tyburn.

From the end of Tothill Street, Victoria Street now leads direct from Westminster Abbey, as old as the days of the Saxons, to Westminster Cathedral, the creation of our own time. The street itself lives up to its name, for it is Victorian both in age and appearance. But to the Catholic of to-day it becomes something of a symbol,

linking up as it does these two buildings which stand for the first beginnings of the faith in this land and its most modern manifestation. Over the London of to-day St Edward's Tower lifts the Cross of Christ. Fitly we end this pilgrimage through London Streets in our Cathedral in which the ancient faith is preached, the ancient worship is offered, the ancient authority is enthroned.



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